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E S S A Y S

A N D

L E T T E R S

On the following

Various and Important SUBJECTS:

V I Z.

On Religion in general.	Of Luxury and Extrava-
Of Happiness.	gance, Temperance and
Of Honesty.	Frugality.
Of Affability and Complai-	Of arbitrary Government
fance.	by a single Person.
Of Envy.	Of the Pride of Men as a
Of Idleness.	Species.

With many others on very Interesting SUBJECTS.

The SECOND EDITION, with Alterations
and large Additions.

Likewise an INDEX to the whole.

L O N D O N :

Printed only for THOMAS HOPE, at the *Bible and Anchor*,
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needle-Street. 1763.

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Advertisement.

THIS Book, the original title of which was only ESSAYS AND LETTERS ON VARIOUS SUBJECTS, having been, for a considerable time, out of print, the Author would long since have republished it; but as he was desirous of altering some things, and adding others, which an ill state of health, and divers avocations, prevented him from doing 'till lately, a new edition hath therefore been so long deferred.

Besides many alterations and other additions, an appendix is now added to the *Dissertation on False Religion*; in which some objections against what had been said, concerning sacrifices and miracles, are endeavoured to be

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obviated ; and also satisfaction given to those persons who were so mistaken, as to suspect the design of that dissertation was to represent all religion unreasonable and ridiculous.

In this Appendix, an attempt is made to set the above mentioned subjects in a clear light, and particularly to distinguish true religion from false ; and likewise to shew, that notwithstanding the Author thinks the insignificant, superstitious, and many times abominable inventions of men, which are dignified by the name of religious duties, and for such obtruded upon the world, are not only unreasonable and ridiculous, but diverse of them even wicked and impious ; yet that nothing can be more rational, beneficial, or truly valuable, than such a religion as is *pure and undefiled*.

The reader is hereby also acquainted, that among other subjects, some of
those

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those treated of in this volume will be more fully considered in a second, speedily to be published by the same Author, under the title of *Considerations upon War, upon Cruelty in general, and Religious Cruelty in particular; also an Attempt to prove, that Everlasting Punishments are inconsistent with the Divine Attributes, &c.*

Although several of the essays on political subjects added in this edition, have been already published in the *Craftsman* and other Papers, yet as most of them are now considerably altered, and much more correct than when formerly printed, and also but too applicable to our present times, in which public Affairs have been most unaccountably managed, it is hoped they will not be unacceptable to those persons who have the welfare of their country at heart; especially as these
political

A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

political essays never proceeded from a party-spirit or selfish views, but were first written, and are now republished, with a sincere desire to discountenance private vices, and to promote public virtues.



P R E-

P R E F A C E

T O

The First EDITION.

IT is very probable that the following Essays might have been published without any Preface, had it not been necessary to acknowledge that several of them were formerly printed in some Weekly Papers: but as certain parts of these writings, at their first appearance, were merely occasional, those are now omitted; and there are such other Alterations, and also such Additions made, as the Author thought might render these short Discourses more useful and entertaining.

THOSE of the Pride of Men as a Species; of Arbitrary Government by a single Person; of False Religion; with the Conclusion; and also Reasons against passing the Bill to repeal the Statute against Conjururation and Witchcraft, &c. were never published before.

THE Design of these Essays being principally to expose superstition and bigotry, to serve the cause of liberty, and promote the practice of morality; this intention can want no excuse, though the performance will stand very much in need of the candour and indulgence of the reader.

SOME, even Protestant readers, may think the Roman Catholick religion has been treated with too much asperity; but if they consider that this religion is contrived to deceive mankind, and make the laity slaves to priests; that in effect the greatest part of Christendom hath been deceived, and reduced by it to the most abject state of slavery; that persecution is taught and practised, morality subverted, and both publick and private happiness in a great degree destroyed by it, they will not perhaps then think, that such a composition of evils can be treated more sharply than it deserves, or than the cause of truth and mankind requires.

IT may further be urged, that there are many valuable persons who profess the Roman Catholick religion: this is acknowledged; but let it be remembered, that numbers of those
who

who appear to be of the Romish church, are far from believing the doctrines of it: however, admitting some real Papists are very deserving, what does this prove? only that there are men so good by nature, that they cannot be corrupted even by the Roman Catholick religion. For certainly, a religion which teaches to believe impossibilities, to worship God with foolish and insignificant ceremonies, to please the Deity, and convince men's understandings by the most wicked cruelties; and that faith is not to be kept with those they are pleased to call hereticks, must tend in the highest degree to corrupt its devotees, raise in such the most unworthy opinions of their Creator, and destroy in them all sentiments of truth, humanity, and virtue.

THOSE who see Popery only under Protestant governments, can have but very imperfect ideas of it: in such countries, Papists behave with meekness and condescension, and their priests go about seeking only whom they may deceive; but in the regions of their power, the people are many of them extremely insolent to those of other persuasions, and the ROARING LIONS go about seeking whom they may devour.

IT will not be wondered at if some men should be of opinion, that the Author has been too severe on false religion in general: there are certain persons so fond of every thing which goes by the name of religion, and entertain such a reverence for it, that however unreasonable, mischievous, or wicked it may be, they nevertheless esteem it sacred: but surely there is room to hope, that good-sense will still more generally get the better of this bigotry, and shew men, that nothing should be revered which is not agreeable to truth, nor be deemed sacred that is not good.

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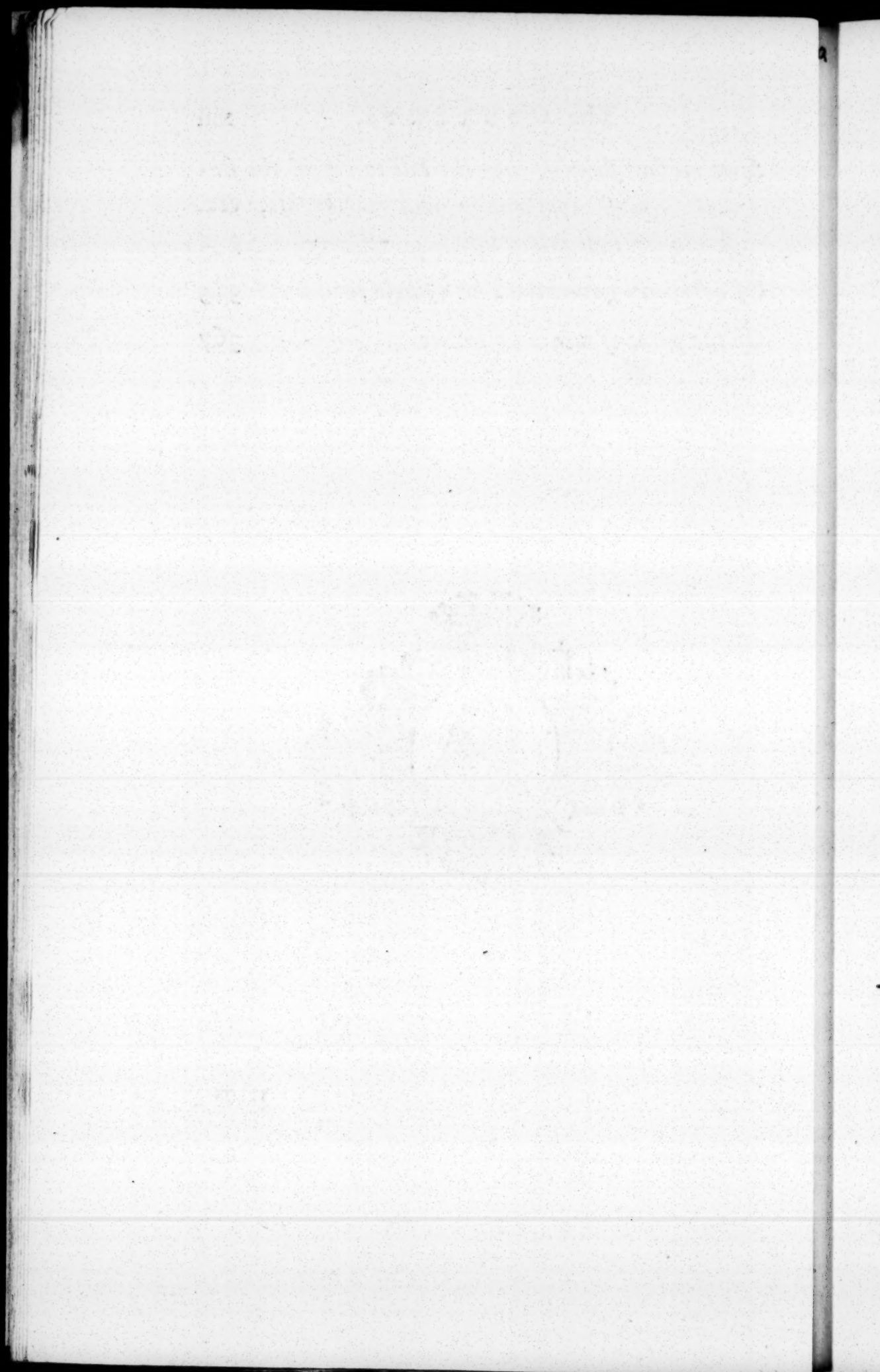
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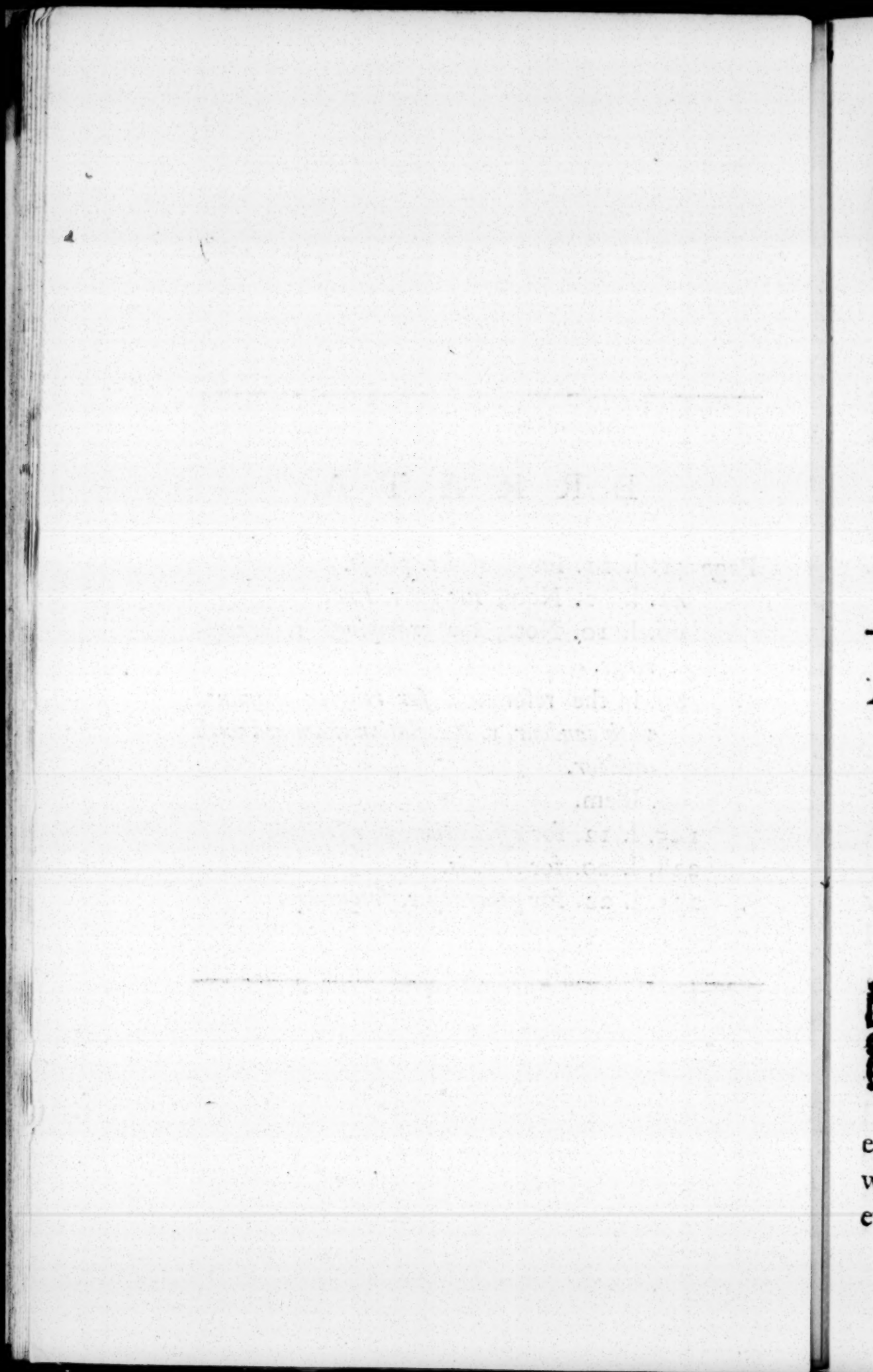


E R



ERRATA.

- Page 41. l. 21. for *pleased* r. *please*.
42. l. 2. Note, for *tw* r. *two*.
66. l. 10. Note, for *crampings* r. *cramp-*
rings.
89. in the reference, for *religion examined*
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candour.
90. Idem.
145. l. 12. for *affetation*, r. *affection*.
228. l. 20. for *it* r. *is*.
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-





A
DISSERTATION
O N
FALSE RELIGION.

Atheism leaves a man to sense, to philosophy, to natural piety, to laws, to reputation; all which may be guides to an outward moral virtue, though religion were not: but superstition dismounts all these, and erecteth an absolute monarchy in the minds of men.

Lord BACON's Essays, p. 74.

AMONG the many errors men have fallen into, or the various cheats they have practised, none seems so generally to have prevailed, continued so long, or been attended with such michiefs, as false religion: this evil, in different shapes, having spread over
B most,

most, or all known parts of the world, hath darkened mens understandings, enslaved both their bodies and minds ; corrupted their morals, and very often caused them to hate and destroy one another.

That may justly be denominated false religion, which teaches the worship of any other being than the ONE God, by whom all things were made ; that inculcates erroneous and unworthy opinions concerning the deity ; or that prescribes such a manner of worshipping him, as is inconsistent with, or contrary to, reason.

MEN have been in all ages, which history gives any account of, and still are so superstitious, that it is impossible to form a catalogue of all the objects of their devotion : their fellow-creatures, even some of the worst of them, such as ambitious, inhuman conquerors, and cruel tyrants, have frequently been deified : not only the sun, moon, and stars, and the four elements ; but the sea, mountains, rivers, lions, tygers, crocodiles, monkies, serpents, dogs, stones, trees, garlick and onions, with a multitude of other things, some of them the most squalid and despicable in the whole creation ; and even images, the works of mens own hands,
have

have had, and in many countries still have, divine worship paid to them.

————— ^a *Crocodilon adorat*
Pars hæc : illa pavet saturam serpentibus ibim.
 * * * * *
Illic cæruleos, hic piscem fluminis, illic
Oppida tota canem venerantur. ———
Porrum & cepe nefas violare, ac frangere morfu.

Well might the poet add:----

O sanctas gentes, quibus hæc nascuntur in hortis
Numina !

As men set up such a multitude of strange gods, they also invented as strange modes of worship : no forms being too foolish or ridiculous ; no actions too cruel or wicked to be by some people or other adopted and sanctified for necessary parts of devotion : and in all human inventions of religion, it is obvious, that nothing has been less intended than the good of mankind.

If the institutors of religion among the antient heathen, had designed it for a public benefit, they would then have taught, that the favour and anger of their deities were annexed only to virtue and vice ; but as such a religion would have been purely of general utility,

utility, and not have served to inflave the world, or procure for particular persons riches without industry, or power without desert, a very different one, such as best suited those purposes, must be invented. Accordingly men were taught, that the gods commanded the performance of certain pretended duties, many of which were either intirely insignificant and useless, or very immoral; and when those ceremonies had been at any time omitted, or not rightly performed, the people were made to believe that the gods were terribly incensed: and any public calamities which happened, were commonly ascribed to these or such like causes. To appease the anger, and obtain the favour of their deities thus offended, sumptuous temples were to be built and richly adorned: prayers, prostrations, feastings, fastings, singing and dancing, washings, shews, games, processions, and sacrifices, both of men and beasts, must be instituted, and vast numbers of priests chosen to officiate, who, as mediators betwixt gods and men, were to render this long catalogue of performances acceptable.

AMONG the many inventions of men to worship and please their gods, very few have so generally prevailed as sacrifices: these were either propitiatory, to procure favour
and

and pardon after some supposed sin ; or gratulatory, to give thanks and praise for some benefit : it may suffice here to inlarge only on the first.

WHEN men believed that they had sinned ; in order to pacify their gods, they sometimes slaughtered beasts ; certain parts of which were reserved for the priests, others eaten by the people, and the rest consumed in the fire : at other times they immolated or murdered one or more of their fellow-creatures, and on particular occasions even their own children. These bloody and inhuman sacrifices were thought so acceptable to the gods, that their wrath was believed to be appeased, and mens pardon obtained by them. But as nothing could be more absurd, or tend to raise more horrible ideas of the deities men worshipped, than to imagine them thus cruel and blood-thirsty ; so nothing could shew a more barbarous disposition in the priests, than the contriving this sanguinary method of devotion.

It would have been natural for persons of uncorrupted understandings, when they were conscious of having done ill, to have supposed that the detesting their sins, and forsaking them, would have been infinitely more pleasing

in the sight of their deities, and consequently much more likely to procure pardon, than all the sacrifices that could have been offered; and thus undoubtedly men would pretty generally have thought, had they not been deceived and misled by priests, who were the chief operators at all sacrifices, and very considerable gainers by them. But since sacrifices of living creatures in general, and more especially of the human kind, appear to be as senseless, and cruel a method of devotion, as ever was invented, and yet have been as universally practised by all nations as any religious ceremony whatever, we may from thence observe, how little strength there is in the argument of general consent, as it is called, in matters of religion; by which is commonly meant the approbation and usage of designing, interested men, and the herd that follow them.^b

IN order to gain belief, that these sacrifices, and the other religious trumpery above-mentioned, were of divine institution, and to

^b Universality, saith that excellent person, Mr. *Hales* of *Eton*, is such a proof of truth, as truth itself is ashamed of; for universality is nothing but a quainter and trimmer name to signify the multitude. Now human authority, at the strongest, is but weak, but the multitude is the weakest part of human authority: it is the great patron of error, most easily abused, and most hardly disabused. *Golden Remains, the third sermon, p. 48.*

to create a proper dependence upon, and reverence for, the priesthood, what numbers of ridiculous and even ^c obscene mysteries, of false oracles, false miracles, false prophecies, false revelations, and false commands of the gods, have been invented? And as an eager desire of being acquainted with future events is observed in the generality of men, it was thought necessary not to neglect so likely a means of encouraging superstition, and obtaining such advantages to the priesthood, as the gratifying this inclination would afford. For this purpose dumb idols (dumb of themselves, but often-times notably inspired by priests) were consulted as oracles; the entrails of beasts inspected, and the flights of birds, with many other things, as trifling and insignificant, observed.

IT is somewhat difficult to determine which was most irrational, the method of pleasing the gods, and purifying the consciences of men by the means abovementioned, of merry-makings, austerities, sacrifices, washings, &c. or that of foretelling contingencies by circumstances which could have

B 4

no

^c The *Eleusinian* mysteries were the most esteemed, and the most famous among the *Greeks*, yet in these ceremonies the object of devotion, according to *Tertullian*, was, *Simulachrum membri virilis revelatur*: or, as *Theodoret* informs us, it was, *Naturæ muliebris imago*.

no manner of connexion with, or relation to, the events pretended to be foretold ; but certain it is, that both were most flagrant impositions on mankind, and attended with fatal consequences. If the sacrifice was pretended to be inauspicious, the intestines of the beast imperfect, or if the birds flew the wrong way, or the sacred chickens did not feed, it was the greatest impiety, and favoured of atheism, to put in practice the most reasonable or best concerted designs. And as, according to this scheme of religion, it was believed that the anger of the gods might be incurred by actions no way hurtful, and their favour obtained by others in no degree serviceable to mankind, nay by some greatly detrimental, it is evident that morality could not be promoted, but on the contrary must be greatly prejudiced by this religious belief. We may therefore safely conclude, that the best moralists, and most useful members of society, both among those of the pagan, and all other false religions, were very slender believers. For the more devout people are in false religion, the worse neighbours, friends, and commonwealths-men, they generally are.

BUT notwithstanding the religion of pagans was so extremely absurd, and in many respects

respects prejudicial to society; and although they worshipped different gods, with various rites and ceremonies, in different cities and countries, yet persecutions of one another on account of religion, and religious wars, were very rare among pagans: these, to the eternal honour of christians, were left for them to practise so frequently, and to such a degree, as to cause the little religious quarrels and bickerings of the heathens to be hardly worth mentioning.

WHAT is above hinted, though a multitude of superstitious fooleries are omitted, may serve to give some idea of false religion, as it prevailed among many of the ancient *Gentiles*, particularly the *Greeks* and *Romans*, who were most famous for wisdom, knowledge, and learning; to this, it may not be amiss to add a short sketch of what travellers have observed and learnt, concerning the religion of some modern pagans.

MR. *Peter Kolben*, a learned and curious traveller, who resided many years at the *Cape of Good Hope*, says of the *Hottentots*, that “ it does not appear, they have any institution of worship directly regarding the supreme God.”^d But they “ adore, as a benign deity,

^d The present state of the *Cape of Good Hope*, p. 94.

“ deity, a certain insect, peculiar, ’tis said, to
“ the *Hottentot* countries. This animal is of
“ the dimensions of a child’s little finger ; the
“ back green ; the belly speckled with white
“ and red. ’Tis provided with two wings,
“ and on its head with two horns.

“ To this little winged deity, whenever
“ they set sight upon it, they render the high-
“ est tokens of veneration. And if it ho-
“ nours, for-sooth, a kraal, (that is, a town
“ or village) with a visit, the inhabitants as-
“ semble about it in transports of devotion,
“ as if the Lord of the universe was come
“ among them. They sing and dance round
“ it, troop after troop, while it stays, in the
“ highest extasy ; throwing to it the powder
“ of an herb they call buchu. They like-
“ wise kill two fat sheep, as a thank-offering
“ for this high honour. And it is impossible
“ to drive out of a *Hottentot*’s head, that the
“ arrival of this insect in a kraal, brings
“ grace and prosperity to all the inhabitants.
“ They believe, that all their offences to that
“ moment are buried in oblivion, and all
“ their iniquities done away. They believe,
“ that some signal blessing attends the kraal ;
“ and that all the inhabitants shall at that
“ time prosper in their undertakings. They
“ look upon themselves as made, by the pre-
“ fence

“ fence of this deity, a new people ; and re-
 “ solve to walk in newness of life ; a work
 “ in which they trust they shall then have
 “ this deity’s assistance in a very extraordi-
 “ nary manner.

“ This insect (says my author) I have
 “ often seen, and beheld the *Hottentots* more
 “ than once at these solemnities.

“ The *Hottentots* will run every hazard
 “ to procure the safety of this animal ; and
 “ are cautious to the last degree of giving
 “ it the least annoyance. A *German*, having
 “ given leave to some *Hottentots* to turn their
 “ cattle for a while upon his land, they re-
 “ moved to the place with their kraal. A son
 “ of this *German*, was amusing himself in
 “ this kraal, when the deified insect appear-
 “ ed. The *Hottentots*, upon sight, ran tu-
 “ multuously to adore it ; while the young
 “ fellow ran to catch it, in order to see the
 “ effect such a capture would produce a-
 “ mong them. He seized it in the midst of
 “ them. But how great was the general
 “ cry and agony, when they saw it in his
 “ hands ! They stared, with distraction in
 “ their eyes, at him, and at one another.
 “ See, see, see, said they, ah ! what is he go-
 “ ing to do ? Will he kill it ? Will he kill
 “ it ?

“ it ? Every limb of them shaking through
“ apprehensions for its fate. Why, said the
“ young fellow, do you make such a hideous
“ noise ? And why such agonies for this pal-
“ try animal ? Ah ! sir, they replied, with
“ the utmost concern, --- ’Tis a divinity ! ’Tis
“ come from heaven ! ’Tis come for a gra-
“ cious end ! Ah ! do not hurt it : do not
“ offend it. We are the most miserable
“ wretches upon earth if you do. This
“ ground will lie under an eternal curse ;
“ and the crime will never be forgiven.
“ This was not enough for the young *Ger-*
“ *man* ; he had a mind to carry the experi-
“ ment farther. He seemed not, therefore,
“ to be moved with their petitions and re-
“ monstrance, but made as if he intended to
“ maim or destroy it. On this appearance
“ of cruelty they started, and ran to and
“ again like people frantic ; asked him where
“ and what his conscience was ? and how he
“ durst think of perpetrating a crime which
“ would bring upon his head all the curses
“ and thunders of heaven. But this not
“ prevailing, they fell all prostrate on the
“ ground before the young fellow ; and,
“ with streaming eyes, and the most mov-
“ ing cries, besought him to spare the crea-
“ ture, and give it its liberty. The young
“ *German* now yielded ; and, having let
“ the

“ the insect fly, the *Hottentots* jumped, capered and shouted in all the transports of joy ; and running after the animal, rendered it the customary divine honours^e.”

CERTAIN persons belonging to a people called *Gaurs*, descended from the antient *Persians*, gave this account to Mr. *Tavernier* of the founder of their religion. *Ils disent que le père de leur prophete, &c.*^f They say that the father of their prophet was one *Azer*, a *Frank* by nation, and carver by trade ; that his wife dreamt God sent an angel to visit her ; that a cælestial light overspread her face, and rendered her as beautiful as the sun, and when she awaked she found herself with child, which child proved to be *Ebrahim-zer-Ateucht* : that the astrologers of that time predicted the birth of this infant, who was sent by God to govern men, and rule in their hearts. That those astrologers declared the same to the king, telling him, that this child should, one day, deprive him of his crown ; whereupon the king caused all the women with child in his dominions to be put to death ; but, by a miracle, the big-belly of the mother of their prophet not appearing, she

^e Idem, B. VI. p. 98. A fig.

^f Les voyages de J. B. *Tavernier*, livre quatrieme, p. 431.

she escaped. When she brought forth her son, her husband, for fear of his life, discovered it to the king, who offered to stab the child, but his arm was presently dried up. Then he ordered the infant to be thrown into the fire, which immediately turned to a bed of roses. Some of the fire they pretend was carried off by those who were converted by the miracle, and is still kept in their chief temple.

THEY say, that this king was killed by a fly for persecuting the young prophet, who, to prove his divine mission, threw himself into a bath of melted silver, which the succeeding king had prepared for him; and, upon his coming out safe, both king and people received him as a prophet; and hence he was called *Zer-Ateucht*, which signifies washed in silver. They fancy he was soon after taken up into paradise.

A FULL account, as far as is come to our knowledge, of the monstrous objects of mens worship in many countries, the ridiculous tales concerning their Gods, and the barbarous as well as foolish methods of pleasing them, would require large volumes, and be quite beside the design of this short essay: I shall therefore only mention a very few instances.

stances. § “ When the *Circassians* kill a goat
“ or kid, they cut off the genitals, and cast
“ them against a wall; if they stick, they
“ pray to them; if otherwise, they cast them
“ away.”

h SOME of the most learned *Gentiles* of *Indo-
stan* say, That God having determined to
create the world, first made three perfect be-
ings; (this caused, says my author, some *Chri-
stians* to believe, that these *Gentiles* had an
idea of the Trinity) that by means of one of
these, called *Brahma*, he created the world,
who also, by the command of God, did publish
four beths, or books, which contain all scien-
ces. The same people are of opinion, that
the second person of the Trinity was nine times
incarnated; that the eighth incarnation was
the most notable; for they hold, that the
world being inflaved under the power of
giants, it was redeemed by the second person
incarnated and born of a virgin at midnight,
the angels singing in the air, and the heavens
pouring down a shower of flowers all that
night. My author adds, that this favours
much of *Christianity*.

It

§ Collection of voyages, printed for *Moses Pitt*, Vol. I.
p. 105.

h *Idem*, Vol. II. p. 105 and 106.

¹IT is a received opinion among the before-mentioned *Gaurs*, that the urine of an ox, or cow, with willow bark, and certain herbs infused in it, kept forty days, and drank after confession, purifies from many sins; but if the offender has been guilty of a crying sin, he must remain ten days in the priest's house, and eat or drink only what the priest gives him. Then in order to absolution, the priest strips him naked, ties a little dog to the great toe of his right foot, pours the urine prepared as above-mentioned, seven times upon his head, and gives him some of it to drink, by which means he is absolved from his sin. This costs the sinner dear, who is obliged to feast all his relations at the priest's house. The priests wives perform this ceremony on the women.

BUT this is an easy penance, compared to what is practised by some ^k, who, out of devotion, go long pilgrimages, not only altogether naked, but loaded with great iron chains. Others stand seven or eight days upright upon their legs, without sitting or lying down, or reposing themselves otherwise, than by leaning some hours of the night upon a stretched cord: others stand for whole hours upon their hands,

¹ Atlas Geographus, Vol. III. p. 317, 318.

^k Collection of travels, &c. p. 102.

hands, the head down, and the feet upward. Some cast themselves from high places on sharp hooks, which tear their flesh in a most miserable manner. Others throw themselves with their bellies under the wheels of chariots, in which certain idols are carried in procession, and, by that means, are immediately crushed to death.

IN the city of *Mexico*, the principal idol, which was adored more than any of the others, was made of all the seeds that grow in the country, ground to meal, and formed into a paste by the blood of sacrificed infants of both sexes. In the same place, the *Spaniards* reckoned 136000 skulls placed in and about a theatre; all which were the heads of men who had been sacrificed.

HAVE we not reason to say with *Lucretius*?

Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum!

By this short view of antient and modern paganism, we may see what strange delusions men have fallen into, or rather what wicked cheats and impositions have been, and still are practised upon them, under the name of religion. These effects of false religion, especially

pecially mens voluntarily making their lives miserable, or putting a cruel end to them, are the more to be admired at, because all religions, before the coming of Christ, did, and the religion of the pagans at this day doth, seem principally to regard this life.

IN the five books of *Moses* there is no mention made of future rewards or punishments¹. Observe such and such ordinances that your days may be long in the land, &c. said those *Jewish* laws. Perform this, and the other
worship

¹ A learned divine, who agrees to, and asserts this truth, hath made a very singular use of it : he undertakes to prove, and it is the principal subject of four large volumes, " That the absence or omission of a future state of rewards and punishments in the *Mosaic* religion, is a certain mark of its divinity." And in his last edition of the *Divine Legation of Moses*, he has formed his argument into the under-written syllogism.

As this eminent author is remarkably, and, in the highest degree, fond of singularity, were it possible for him to hope, as surely he may, that he is so singular in this opinion, as to be the only person who ever did, or does, or possibly ever will, entertain it ; what inexpressible satisfaction and joy must this afford him ? and the more still, when he finds that this wonderful discovery, of which the honour is so justly due to him, may be extended farther than perhaps he at first imagined ; and that even the religion and society of the *Hottentots* will, by this argument, be proved to receive their support from an extraordinary providence. For it evidently appears, from the most authentic accounts of those people, particularly in the present state of the *Cape of Good Hope*, vol. I. p. 136 and 139. that though they have religion, and are formed into society, yet they do not believe a future state of
rewards

worship and ceremony, that you may prosper in your undertakings, saith the pagan religion. The rewards and punishments proposed and threatned in those religions were chiefly temporary; for some of the antients, before the time of Christ, had no notions of immortality, and others had only such as were very obscure and confused. At this day, the case of the professors of all religions, unless we except the *Christian* and *Jewish*^m, is much the same: many believe or know nothing of a life to come, and those who do

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believe

rewards and punishments. This being the case of that nation, we will take the liberty of transcribing our author's syllogism, with the addition of *Hottentot* to *Jewish*; and the reader will see plainly, that the argument is equally strong in behalf of the former, as of the latter.

"Whatsoever religion and society," says our most paradoxical author, "have no future state for their support, must be supported by an extraordinary providence: the
 " { *Jewish* } religion and society have no future state
 { *Hottentot* }
 " for their support: therefore the { *Jewish* } religion and
 { *Hottentot* }
 " society { were } supported by an extraordinary provi-
 { are }
 " dence."

To this I shall only add, that the argument made use of by our inimitable author to prove the divine legation of *Moses*, which is "the omission of the doctrine of a future state of rewards and punishments, in the laws and religion he delivered to the *Jewish* people," will as strongly prove the divine legation of the law-giver of the *Hottentots*.

^m Among the *Jews*, the *Sadduces* denied the resurrection, and the being of angels and spirits, and consequently denied future rewards or punishments.

believe it, whether heathens or *Mahometans*, describe both that, and what may be hoped for, or feared hereafter, in a manner extremely unreasonable and ridiculous.

INDEED, not only pagans and *Mahometans*, but the generality of *Jews* and *Christians* also, entertain very uncertain, imperfect, and irrational opinions of a future state, and the enjoyments or sufferings therein to be expected.

BUT however short of full satisfaction, or of our wishes, the little knowledge we have on this subject may be; or however unlikely or unworthy, so poor a creature as man, shall to some appear of being or becoming immortal, yet surely no one can doubt but God, who hath created all things, and bestowed life upon us, may, if he pleases, after we have paid the debt owing to nature, restore life to us, and render it everlasting. And were the expectation of a future and immortal state, perfectly freed from all fear of future and endless misery, and a hope of eternal felicity annexed to it, nothing could then be so desirable; nothing could then afford such comfort and support in all afflictions, and particularly in the article of death. But for men to believe, that their Creator will raise them again, and perpetuate their lives, in order to perpetuate their misery,
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is entertaining the most absurd and contradictory, as well as the most unworthy and impious thoughts of a being of infinite goodness. Is it not therefore a reasonable supposition, that as all men die, all will cease to be, except those, who, by living virtuously and piously here, shall, in some measure, be fitted for happiness hereafter? And doth not a deprivation of such endless bliss as good men shall enjoy, seem a sufficient punishment to the bad for sins committed in a temporary state? And is not the dread of such an unspeakable loss, a most powerful incentive for men so to live in this world, as that they may enjoy endless felicity in the next?

CAN it then be too much deplored, that the hopes and fears raised in men, by a belief of future rewards and punishments, should be made so ill an use of? that instead of rendering this faith and these expectations subservient to the promotion of virtue and piety, and true religion, they should, by weak, or designing men, be prostituted to the most foolish and insignificant, or the most selfish and wicked purposes?

WHEN *Christianity*, which we are assured was appointed by God himself, appeared in the world, and Christ expressly commanded

his apostles, *To go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature*ⁿ; who would not have believed, that a most rational and efficacious religion (for it is certain God institutes no other) should have been every where known, and every where received? and that universal righteousness and holiness would have been the consequence? Yet this, alas! is far from being the case. Even the religion of the greatest part of those who profess *Christianity* is extremely trifling and ridiculous; ---- that of too many, extremely corrupt and abominable. Wickedness also is spread over the face of the whole earth, and abounds in a most prodigious degree to this day; and, in above seventeen hundred years, great part of mankind, as we have reason to believe, have not heard of Christ, and multitudes to whom he hath been preached, receive the account of him, and the religion he instituted, with the utmost contempt.

IN *Asia* there are now very few *Christians*; in *Africa* still fewer; in *America*, except the *European* colonies, none who deserve the name: so that *Europe* is the only quarter of the world in which the *Christian* religion is for the most part professed; and, in *Europe*, how few, who call themselves *Christians*, are
found

ⁿ Mark xvi. 15.

found believers? and what a small number, even of those who are orthodox in faith, so obey the precepts of the gospel as to answer the design of God, and reap the great benefits intended by him, in that amazing manifestation of his son, whom he sent into the world to teach righteousness, to die for sinners, and to reconcile the Creator to his creatures!

THE present profession of religion in the known parts of the world stands thus. First, the *Pagan*, already mentioned, in various shapes in different countries; secondly, the *Jewish*; thirdly, the *Mahometan*, concerning many doctrines of which its followers differ widely; fourthly, *Christianity*, divided, as is well known, into a multitude of opposite sects, *living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another* °.

MAHOMETANISM, which is professed by great numbers of people in *Asia*, by some in *Europe*, and by many in *Africa*, ought certainly to be commended for maintaining the unity of the Deity, and forbidding any resemblances to be made of him: but, in other respects, like the rest of the false religions in the world, is composed of senseless

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whimsies,

° Titus iii. 3.

whimfies, and very wicked doctrines; teaching that to please God and purify mens souls, they must frequently wash their bodies, and perform certain painful pilgrimages, and other foolish acts of devotion: and instead of inculcating peace and good-will to men, this religion excites its devotees to hate and destroy all of every other persuasion, and places the utmost merit in propagating their own with fire and sword: but though these religious believers imagine God has commanded them to treat their fellow-creatures with so much cruelty, they think it highly pleasing to him that they should feed and cherish dogs, and buy birds shut up in cages, to give them their liberty.

MAHOMET, the founder of this religion, was a most wicked impostor, and the *Koran*, which is held in such veneration among *Mahometans*, that they are not to touch it with unwashed hands, on pain of death; and the same punishment is allotted for *Jews* or *Christians*, if they touch it at all: this book, pretended to be so sacred, and said to be given forth by divine inspiration, is a gallimawfry of childish, nonsensical, and ridiculous tales; of monstrous lies, respecting the pretended revelations made to *Mahomet*, and contains
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the grossest representations of paradise, and the state of the blessed there.

THE *Mahometans* say, that God sent the *Koran* to *Mahomet* by the angel *Gabriel*, writ on parchment, made of that ram's skin which *Abraham* sacrificed instead of his son *Isaac*. This pretended holy book teaches that there are seven paradises, all of which *Mahomet* viewed on a creature called *Alberack*, bigger than an ass, and less than a mule: the first paradise is of fine silver, the second of gold, the third of precious stones, wherein there is an angel, betwixt whose hands is the distance of 70,000 days journey, and that he is always reading in a book; the fourth paradise is of emerald, the fifth of crystal, the sixth of the colour of fire, and the seventh a delicious garden watered with fountains and rivers of milk and honey, and wine. It is added, that this paradise is guarded by angels, of which one has a cow's head, with horns which have 40,000 knots, and that there are 40 days journey betwixt each knot. There are other angels which have 70 mouths, and every mouth 70 tongues, and each tongue praises God 70 times a day in 70 different idioms. Before the throne of God there are 14 wax-candles lighted, which are 50 years journey from one end to the other: that all
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the apartments of heaven are garnished with what may be conceived most pompous, rich and magnificent: that the blessed are there fed with the most rare and delicious messes: that they marry women who are always virgins, and of so resplendent a beauty, that if one of them should appear without the walls of paradise, she would inlighten the whole world, like the sun at noon-day; and if she should spit into the sea, the waters would become sweet as honey. It is also, as a *French* author informs us, a received opinion concerning the male-inhabitants of heaven, "*Que chacun y auroit la force de cent hommes pour se satisfaire entierement avec les femmes.*"

Mr. SALE, in his preliminary discourse to the translation of the *Koran*, page 96, gives a particular relation of what the *Mohamedans* say concerning paradise, which, among many other particulars, is, that the stones therein are pearls and jacinths; the walls of its buildings enriched with gold and silver, and the trunks of all its trees are of gold. But all these glories will be eclipsed by the resplendent and ravishing girls of paradise, with their large black eyes, the enjoyment of whose company, will be a principal felicity of the faithful. These nymphs, they say, are created, not of clay,

as mortal women are, but of musk ; being, as their prophet often affirms, free from all impurities.

THE general and orthodox doctrine of the *Mohamedans* is, says my author, that the whole of this is to be believed in the obvious and literal acceptance.

THESE *Mahometans* declare, that their religion is to be planted without miracles, dispute, or contradiction, and the opponents are to be cut off without any form of process ; and that the faithful, who kill unbelievers, deserve paradise.

CERTAINLY the mufti, and others, whose interest it is that this religion should be believed and propagated, act a very consistent part in preventing, as much as possible, the spreading of literature, or the improvement of knowledge among these true believers, as they affect to call themselves : and they are also in the right, to hinder, as much as in them lies, any disputes or reasonings concerning their religion ; for learning and good sense are terrible enemies to superstition, and reasoning about false religion serves only to discover the folly and wickedness of it.

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THE religions, we have hitherto taken a cursory view of, are the *Pagan* and *Mahometan*; both of them monstruously absurd, and evidently calculated to deceive: nevertheless, *Mahometanism* has prevailed about eleven hundred years, and is thought by some to have gained a greater number of votaries than *Christianity*. *Paganism* was, for a long tract of time, spread over almost the whole world, and multitudes are, at this day, in the practice of the grossest idolatry. *Monf. Bayle* has given us his opinion in what proportions the principal religions of the world are professed, in these words, “*Si nous divisons les regions congnues de la terre en 30 parties égales celle des Chrétiens sera comme cinq, celle des Mahometans comme six, et celle de Payens comme dix-neuf.*” He has omitted the *Jewish* religion, which is somewhat to be wondered at in so accurate a writer. ^P

NOTWITHSTANDING the knowledge of the supreme Being, and the means or manner of worshipping him aright, is so absolutely necessary to his honour, and the happiness of mankind both here and hereafter; yet we see
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^P The inhabitants of all the lands throughout the globe, says a modern geographer, are divided in thirty parts, whereof the *Pagans*, and those who have no religion, are twenty; the *Mahometans* are five; the *Christians* are four; the *Jews* are one. *Gordon's Geographical Grammar*, p. 400.

this knowledge was for many ages hid from all nations except one, and is now revealed but to a very few, if compared with the bulk of mankind.

FOR above two thousand years all the world, as far as we know, except the *Israelites*, were utterly ignorant of the true God, and how to worship him acceptably: even the *Israelites*, God's chosen people, were for a considerable time exceedingly prone to idolatry. That very generation of men, who had been eye-witnesses of so many miracles wrought by God for their preservation, who were daily fed by miracle for near forty years, with some of whom God talked face to face, and for whose sake he *graciously promised* to cast out or destroy many nations; these people, notwithstanding this knowledge of God, familiarity with him, and the signal favours bestowed upon them, fell frequently into idolatry, and we find their high priest *Aaron*, tho' of God's own appointing, very ready to make and set up a calf for the people to worship.

IN such arts and sciences as are necessary to promote the happiness of mankind in this world only, men have, by their natural abilities made, and still do make, many excellent and useful discoveries: they have also in these things,

things, formed certain rules, the result of good sense and right reasoning ; which, if duly attended to, will in a considerable degree manifest errors or deceits, advance truth and certainty, and assist men to bring about the ends proposed. In morality these rules are so obvious, that tho' they are too little practised, they are pretty generally agreed in ; for rational creatures readily know and feel what conduces most to the happiness both of the individual and of society : but respecting religion, we are told our natural abilities, of themselves, can stand us in very little stead.

THE foundation of religion, according to common acceptation, consists in the knowledge of God and his laws, and of what is necessary to be believed or performed by men for avoiding or appeasing the anger, and gaining the favour of their Creator. The scriptures inform us that this knowledge is not attainable by human wisdom. ¹ *The world by wisdom knew not God.* ² *For what man knoweth the things of a man save the spirit of a man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the spirit of God.*

THIS truth is also evident from observation and experience : for what can be more absurd

¹ 1 Cor. chap. i. ver. 21.

² Idem, chap. ii. ver. 11.

more absurd than the accounts given concerning God by the generality even of the wisest and most learned of the antients, who were not favoured with revelation? Or what more unreasonable than their religion? One of the most sensible, and most modest accounts, concerning the deity, that we meet with among those people, was the inscription on the altar at *Athens*, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD.

INDEED, if men would be honest, they must confess that of themselves they know little or nothing relating to the essence of God: what knowledge we have of him is by his works, or by revelation, and from these we form some judgment of his attributes. But however plausibly some may talk or write concerning the nature of the deity, yet all they can say, on this subject, serves only to manifest their ignorance.

ONE of the most learned divines our age hath produced, endeavouring to reconcile the accounts in scripture of God's appearing to men under a human shape, with a spirit's being absolutely invisible and not included under any form whatsoever, tells us, * "That
" all these appearances of God, were in reality
" no other than Christ himself; who from the
" beginning

* Dr. Samuel Clarke's sermons, vol. I. p. 105.

“beginning appeared in a bodily glory, having *the form of God*, and being *the visible image of the invisible God*.”

WE see how apt the greatest men are to fall into absurdities, and even contradictions in terms on such abstruse subjects: for the doctor tells us of one having *the form of God*,^t *who is not included under any form whatsoever*, and being the *visible image* of the *invisible God*.

WHEN men search after that knowledge, or endeavour to practise those things in which neither nature or reason can be a positive rule; it is certain that without revelation, they must err widely from the truth, and are very liable to be imposed upon by artful and designing persons: it is also certain that those who set up for guides, where neither nature or reason can shew the way, must, without the assistance of divine revelation, be extremely bewildered themselves, or design to mislead others.

REVELATION is either outward and mediate, as by the scriptures; or inward and immediate, by the spirit. God having, as we are assured, manifested the knowledge of himself and his laws to men by certain books or writings,

^t Idem, p. 99.

writings, which to be generally read must be translated into many languages; and to be preserved and sufficiently distributed, vast numbers of copies must be transcribed or printed: these circumstances, altho' it is supposed mens eternal salvation depends, in a great measure, upon the text being preserved pure, and their rightly understanding it; these circumstances nevertheless make those writings liable to wrong translations, erroneous transcriptions and printings; and also to false interpretations, interpolations^u, castrations, and other fraudulent practices: besides which there has been, and still remains, great uncertainty respecting what books are to be admitted as canonical, and what rejected as spurious.^w

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^u The remarkable text in the 1st of St. *John*, ch. v. ver. 7. about which there have been such violent disputes, and upon which so much is by some thought to depend, has been acknowledged by many considerable divines, and others, to be an interpolation. That the learned Mr. *Whiston*, and the most sagacious Sir *Isaac Newton*, particularly esteemed it as such, may be seen in the former's *Appendix* to the 2d volume of his *Authentic Records*.

^w *Solomon's Song*, or *Ballad*, as it is called in our old bibles, which we are taught to believe was intended to set forth the mutual love of Christ and his church, is believed by some learned and pious persons to have been no other than a dialogue between *Solomon* and one of his wives: and then certainly, as Mr. *Whiston* terms it, of a lascivious nature. Not only *Castalio* and Mr. *Whiston*, but Sir *Isaac Newton* and the famous *Grotius*, were of this opinion. For the sentiments of the first, see *Dictionnaire* par Monf. *Bayle*, article *Castalion*; for the second and third, Mr. *Whiston's Appendix* above cited; and for the third, *Grotius's Preface* to his *Annotations upon the Song of Solomon*.

These things, which pious and learned men are so sensible of, and have long lamented, being considered, as also that there are many passages in the bible hard to be understood, "*which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest unto their own destruction,*" it seems as tho' immediate divine revelation was absolutely necessary to a right understanding and explaining the scriptures.

AND this will, perhaps, still more evidently appear, if we take a view of the small success that has attended the publishing many immense volumes of glossaries, commentaries, harmonies, sermons, the meetings of synods, councils, &c. and all other human endeavours to remove difficulties relating to the word of God; for we see these difficulties still remain, and in such a degree as to occasion, among the different professors of Christianity, multitudes of contradictory opinions and practices in religion, some of which, tho' highly absurd, and even very wicked, yet are pretended to be warranted, or commanded by the holy scriptures.

AMONG innumerable instances that might be given of this, two only may suffice. From these words, *Hoc est corpus meum*, This is my body, *Matt. xxvi. 26.* and *Coge ingredi*, Com-
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As the writings of the most learned men, for settling the canon, or explaining the meaning of scripture, are often contradictory; and one synod or council hath frequently set aside and condemned what another hath ordained; there seems no effectual remedy for the evils arising from misapprehensions, and endless disputes, nor any certain rule whereby to judge infallibly concerning the mind and will of God contained in the scriptures, but the immediate divine illumination of the spirit.

INDEED, all the several denominations of *Christians* do pray to God for the divine inspirations of his holy spirit; nevertheless, much the greater part of *Christians* seem so far from expecting these supernatural assistances, that they argue against the reasonableness of them, declare they are ceased, and ridicule those who plead for the necessity of them.

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IT must be confessed, there appear almost insuperable difficulties relating to immediate

revelations or inspirations : as how men can distinguish between those and their own fancies ; and by what means they may demonstrate to others that they are really inspired. As to a firm persuasion in mens minds, that they are so ; even such a firm persuasion as to give up their lives for a proof of it, that we know by many examples (particularly the *Anabaptists*, about the year 1553, in *Holland*, and the *Fifth-Monarchy Men*, and many other enthusiasts among ourselves) may happen to those who are apparently mistaken : and as to miracles, besides the number of illusive tricks put off for supernatural operations, and other abominable cheats concerning them ; there are instances both in sacred and profane history, that miracles have been wrought by gross idolaters. But however difficult it may be for us to gain an absolute certainty, or give to others an evident proof of revelation, yet surely holy men of old, who wrote as they were divinely inspired, had some infallible criterion whereby to distinguish divine revelations from all conceits of their own ; for on this foundation stands our religion. Without revelation, the scriptures inform us, there is no attaining to the knowledge of God, or of those performances required in his worship. * *No man knoweth the*

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* Matth. xi. 27.

son but the father : neither knoweth any man the father save the son, and he to whomsoever the son will reveal him.

As the knowledge of God, and the entertaining right and worthy opinions concerning him, are the foundation of true religion, we are, doubtless, greatly beholden to scripture-revelation for raising in us such ideas of the supreme Being, as men, by natural wisdom, could never have formed : but it must be acknowledged, that there are some accounts in holy writ concerning God, and his dealings with men, which are hard to be understood : the following passages, with many others, seem to be of this kind.

^y *THEN went up Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel. And they saw the God of Israel : and there was under his feet, as it were, a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness. And upon the nobles of the children of Israel he laid not his hand : also they saw God, and did eat and drink.*

^z *AND the Lord spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend. In the same chapter, verse the 20th, God said to*

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Moses,

^y Exod. xxiv. 9, 10, 11.

^z Idem, xxxiii. 11.

Moses, *Thou canst not see my face : for there shall no man see me, and live.* The rest of this chapter is as follows : *And the Lord said, Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock. And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a cleft of the rock ; and will cover thee with my hand, while I pass by. And I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back-parts : but my face shall not be seen.*

^a *AND the Lord passed by before him, (viz. Moses) and proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the childrens children, unto the third, and to the fourth generation.*

^b *AND the Lord said, Who shall entice Ahab, king of Israel, that he may go up, and fall at Ramoth-gilead ? And one spake, saying after this manner, and another saying after that manner. Then there came out a spirit, and stood before the Lord, and said, I will entice him. And the Lord said unto him, wherewith ? And he said, I will go out, and be a lying spirit*

^a Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7.

^b 2 Chron. xviii. 19, 20, 21, 22.

spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And the Lord said, Thou shalt entice him, and thou shalt also prevail: go out, and do even so. Now therefore behold, the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of these thy prophets.

OF God's chosen people it is said, ^c *I gave them also statutes that were not good, and judgments whereby they should not live.*

^a *AND not only this, but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac, (for the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth,) it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore*

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^c Ezek. xx. 25.^a Rom. ix. 10 to 19.

hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will?

THESE are a few, among the many passages in holy writ, relating to the Deity, and his conduct to men, which seem to require immediate, divine revelation, or a measure of the same spirit, by which they were given forth, to explain them.

As we are informed, that revelation is absolutely requisite to the knowledge of God, so is it likewise to the knowledge and practice of religion. If we take a view of the rites and ceremonies which make up so great a part of religion, and were commanded in the scriptures, it will be easy to see that men by reason could never have discovered those performances were necessary in the worship of God, or would be pleasing unto him. Could the *Israelites* by reason have found out, that it was the will of their creator ** they should make them fringes in the borders of their garments, and put upon the fringe of the borders a blue ribband; that it might be unto them for a fringe, that they might look upon it, and remember all the commandments of the Lord, and do them?*

** Vide the law of fringes, &c. Numb. xv. 37, 38, 39.*

them? Or could they have known that God required every man-child among them to be circumcised, on pain of being cut off from his people? Or could they have presumed that the slaughtering of innocent creatures, and burning their flesh, would atone for mens sins, and make a sweet savour unto the Lord? Or could that people have been led by reason to suppose their high priest should be consecrated, that is, made holy, ^f *by the blood of a ram being put upon the tip of the right ear, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot?* Or could the wit of man have ever discovered that any of the rites and ceremonies with which the four books of *Moses* are almost filled, could be acceptable to the Deity? And indeed, could we by reason ever have found out, that not only the mere rites or ceremonies, but even the great mysteries of the *Christian* religion were suited to please God, or procure our salvation? By our natural wisdom we could never have made this discovery. ^g *The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*

CAN

^f Lev. viii. 23.^g 1 Cor. ii. 14.

CAN we merely by the light of reason see, that ^h mens being baptized, and partaking of the Lord's supper, are necessary to their salvation? Can the trinity in unity, or a virgin's conceiving, and bringing forth a child, which child was God manifested in the flesh, be comprehended or proved by our natural wisdom? Surely the many sermons and discourses preached and wrote to shew how agreeable these great mysteries are to human reason, prove directly the contrary; and indeed demonstrate that these are not fit subjects for reasoning, but are merely the objects of our humble faith and admiration.

THE *Christian* religion, notwithstanding its purity, when compared with other forms of worship, is nevertheless, according to the opinion of archbishop *Tillotson*, in many respects suited to the weakness and common prejudices of mankind; especially respecting mysteries and sacrifice. We will hear what the candid and pious archbishop says on both the subjects. That excellent prelate thus introduces

^h The reverend doctor *Samuel Clarke* was of opinion, that the tw sacraments are not in themselves essential to religion; for he says, "God, in condescension to the necessities of *Christians*, has appointed us two sacramental rites, not as " in themselves essential to religion, but as external helps to " bind stronger upon us the obligation of those moral duties " wherein the essence of religion truly consists, &c." *Sermons*, vol. I. p. 118.

introduces his sermon concerning the incarnation of Christ.

i “ THE third and last thing which I proposed upon this argument of the incarnation of the son of God, was to give some account of this dispensation, and to shew that the wisdom of God thought fit thus to order things in great condescension to the weakness and common prejudices of mankind. * * * * *

“ AND it is the more necessary to give some account of this matter, because, after all that hath hitherto been said in answer to the objections against it, it may still seem very strange to a considering man, that God, who could without all this circumstance and condescension, have done the business for which his son came into the world, and appeared in our nature; that is, could have given the same laws to mankind, and have offered to us the forgiveness of our sins, and eternal life, upon our repentance for sins past, and a sincere endeavour of obedience for the future: I say, that notwithstanding this, he should yet make choice of this way for the redemption and recovery of fallen man, by sending
“ his

i Vol. I. p. 467, and following.

“ his son in our nature to accomplish this
“ design.”

* * * * *

“ And in the

“ FIRST place, I make no manner of doubt
“ to say, that it would be a great presumption
“ and boldness in any man to affirm, that the
“ infinite wisdom of God could not have
“ brought about the salvation of men by any
“ other way, than by this very way in which
“ he hath done it. For why should we take
“ upon us to set limits to infinite wisdom, and
“ pretend to know the utmost extent of it?
“ But since God hath been pleased to pitch
“ upon this way rather than any other, this
“ surely ought to be reason enough to satisfy
“ us of the peculiar wisdom and fitness of it,
“ whether the particular reasons of it appear
“ to us or not.

“ AND yet it cannot be denied to be a
“ very noble argument, and well worthy our
“ consideration, to enquire into the reasons
“ of this dispensation, and to assign them par-
“ ticularly, if we can. For I look upon my-
“ steries and miracles in religion to be much
“ of the same nature, and that a great reve-
“ rence is due to both where they are certain,
“ and necessary in the nature and reason of
“ the

“ the thing ; but neither of them are easily to
 “ be admitted without necessity, and very
 “ good evidence.

“ SECONDLY, I consider in the next place,
 “ that in the several revelations which God
 “ hath made of himself to mankind, he hath
 “ with great condescension accommodated
 “ himself, both as to the manner and de-
 “ gree of them, to the condition and capa-
 “ city, and other circumstances, of the persons
 “ and people to whom they were made.

“ PARTICULARLY we find, that the dis-
 “ pensation of God towards the *Jewish* nation
 “ was full of condescension to the temper,
 “ and prejudices, and other circumstances of
 “ that people. For the religion and laws
 “ which God gave them were far from being
 “ the best and most perfect in themselves ; in
 “ which sense some understand that passage
 “ in the prophet *Ezekiel*, where it is said,
 “ that God gave them *statutes which were not*
 “ *good* ; that is, very imperfect in comparison
 “ of what he could and would have given
 “ them, had they been capable of them, and
 “ yet such as were very well suited and fit-
 “ ted to their present capacity and circum-
 “ stances.

“ THIRDLY,

“THIRDLY, I observe yet further, that
“ though the *Christian* religion, as to the
“ main and substance of it, be a most perfect
“ institution, being the law of nature revived
“ and perfected ; yet upon a due consideration
“ of things it cannot be denied, that the man-
“ ner and circumstances of this dispensation
“ are full of condescension to the weakness of
“ mankind, and very much accommodated
“ to the most common and deeply radicated
“ prejudices of men concerning God and
“ religion ; and peculiarly fitted to remove
“ and root them out of the minds of men,
“ by substituting something in the place of
“ them, of as near a compliance with them as
“ was consistent with the honour of Almighty
“ God, and the great design of the *Christian*
“ religion.

“ IT is not easy to give a certain account of
“ the true original of some notions and preju-
“ dices concerning God and religion, which
“ have generally obtained in the world, in that
“ variety of religions, and the different ways of
“ worship and superstition which have been
“ in several nations of the earth : but in history
“ and fact this is certain, that some notions,
“ and those very gross and erroneous, did al-
“ most universally prevail, even among those
“ who

“ who did extremely differ in the particular
“ forms and modes of their superstition.

“ AND though some of these were much
“ more tolerable than others, yet God seems
“ to have had great consideration of some very
“ weak and gross apprehensions of mankind
“ concerning religion. And as in some of the
“ laws given by *Moses*, God was pleased parti-
“ cularly to consider the hardness of the hearts
“ of that people, so he seems likewise to have
“ very much suited the dispensation of the gos-
“ pel, and the method of our salvation, by the
“ incarnation and sufferings of his son, to the
“ common prejudices of mankind ; especially
“ of the Heathen world, whose minds were
“ less prepared for this dispensation than the
“ *Jews*, if we consider the light and advantages
“ which the *Jewish* nation had above the *Gen-*
“ *tile* world : that so, by this means and me-
“ thod, he might wean them by degrees from
“ their gross conceptions of things, and rec-
“ tify more easily their wrong apprehensions,
“ by gratifying them in some measure, and in
“ a gracious compliance with our weakness,
“ by bending and accommodating the way and
“ method of our salvation to our weak capa-
“ city, and imperfect conceptions of things.

“ FOURTHLY, And that God hath done
“ this

“ this in the dispensation of the gospel, will,
“ I think, very plainly appear in the follow-
“ ing instances ; in most of which I shall be
“ very brief, and only insist somewhat more
“ largely upon the last of them.

“ 1st. THE world was much given to ad-
“ mire mysteries in religion. The *Jews* had
“ theirs ; several of which, by God’s own ap-
“ pointment, were reserved and kept secret in
“ a great measure from the people ; others
“ were added by the superstition of after-ages,
“ and held in equal or rather greater veneration
“ than the former : and the Heathen
“ likewise had theirs ; the devil always affect-
“ ing to imitate God so far as served his wicked
“ and malicious design of seducing mankind
“ into idolatry, and the worship of himself :
“ and therefore the scripture always speaks of
“ the Heathen idolatry as the worship of de-
“ vils, and not of God : so that almost every
“ nation had their peculiar and celebrated
“ mysteries ; most of which were either very
“ odd and fantastical, or very lewd and im-
“ pure, or very inhuman and cruel, and every
“ way unworthy of the deity.

“ BUT the great mystery of the *Christian*
“ religion, the incarnation of the Son of God ;
“ or, as the apostle calls it, *God manifested in*
“ the

“ *the flesh*, was such a mystery, as for the
“ greatness and wonderfulness, for the infinite
“ mercy and condescension of it, did obscure
“ and swallow up all other mysteries. For
“ which reason the apostle, in allusion to the
“ *Heathen* mysteries, and in contempt of them,
“ speaking of the great mystery of the *Christian*
“ religion, says, *Without controversy great is*
“ *the mystery of godliness, God was manifested*
“ *in the flesh*, &c. Since the world had such
“ an admiration for mysteries, he instanceth
“ in that which was a mystery indeed ; a
“ mystery beyond all dispute, and beyond
“ all comparison.

“ 2^{dly}. THERE was likewise a great incli-
“ nation in mankind to the worship of a vi-
“ sible and sensible deity ; and this was a main
“ root and source of the various idolatries
“ in the *Heathen* world. Now, to take men
“ off from this, God was pleased to appear in
“ our nature ; that they who were so fond of
“ a visible deity, might have one to whom
“ they might pay divine worship, without
“ danger of idolatry, and without injury to
“ the divine nature : even a true and natural
“ image of God the Father, the fountain of
“ the deity ; or, as the apostle to the *Hebrews*
“ describes the Son of God, the resplendency

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“ or

“ or brightness of his Father’s glory, and the
“ express character or image of his person.

“ 3^{dly}. ANOTHER notion which had gene-
“ rally obtained among mankind, was con-
“ cerning the expiation of the sins of men, and
“ appeasing the offended deity by sacrifice,
“ upon which they supposed the punishment
“ due to the sinner was transferred, to exempt
“ him from it : especially by the sacrifices of
“ men, which had almost universally pre-
“ vailed in the *Gentile* world.

“ AND this notion of the expiation of sin,
“ by sacrifices of one kind or other, seems to
“ have obtained very early in the world, and
“ among all other ways of divine worship to
“ have found the most universal reception in
“ all times and places. * * * * *

“ AND, with this general notion of man-
“ kind, whatever the ground and foundation
“ of it might be, God was pleased so far to
“ comply, as once for all to have a general
“ atonement made for the sins of all mankind,
“ by the sacrifice of his only Son, whom his
“ wise providence did permit by wicked hands
“ to be crucified and slain.”

THE rest of this sermon is well worth my
reader’s perusal, but from so much as has been
here

here quoted, it evidently appears to have been the archbishop's opinion, that God seems to have had great consideration of some very weak and gross apprehensions of mankind concerning religion, and that he not only suited some of the laws given by *Moses* to the hardness of the hearts of the *Jews*, but likewise that he very much suited the dispensation of the gospel, and the method of our salvation, by the sufferings of his Son, to the common prejudices and weakness of mankind. It is also plain the archbishop made no manner of doubt to say, that the infinite wisdom of God could have brought about the salvation of men by other ways, than by this very way in which he hath done it. Thus, for example, if God, who formed the hearts of all men, had thought fit to have bestowed more wisdom on them, and had been pleased to give them juster apprehensions concerning himself, then even the dispensation of the gospel, and the way of our salvation, might have been different to what they now are.

BUT, from the apostle *Paul's* words, it seems as if the dispensation of the gospel, and the way of our salvation, were not suited to many wise men after the flesh: for they were not called, or at least not to preach. ^k *For ye see*

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your

^k 1 Cor. chap. i. ver. 26, 27.

your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called. But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, to confound the things which are mighty. ¹ But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness. ^m For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?

ALTHOUGH God seems to have very much suited the dispensation of the gospel to the common prejudices of mankind; yet this was that he might wean them by degrees from their gross conceptions of things, and, as the archbishop adds, rectify more easily their wrong apprehensions, by gratifying them in some measure: particularly God intended by the sacrifice of his only Son to put an end to all sacrifices.

AND indeed the *Christian* religion, as we find it in the New Testament, was originally so plain and simple, so void of pomp; to such a degree free from ceremonies, and so disincumbered from altars and sacrifices, that there

appeared

¹ 1 Cor. chap. i. ver. 23.

^m Idem, ver. 19, 20.

appeared very little or no business for priests; and above all, the institutor of it was so meek and humble, so detached from all temporal interests, declaring his kingdom was not of this world, that *Christianity* in its origin seemed to carry a most unpromising aspect for gaining riches, power, or dominion to its professors. But that this religion might be made subservient to certain worldly ends and purposes, some of the pretended followers of Christ, in after-times, undertook to new-mold it, and, with this view, notwithstanding the manifest opposition, in many respects, between the *Pagan* and the *Christian* religions, they incorporated such usages, rites, and ceremonies of the *Heathen* worship, as had been found, by long experience, best calculated to amuse and deceive, and were likely to bring most profit and advantage to the church.

THESE, and many other gross corruptions, infected *Christianity* in the early ages of it, and are now grown to an exorbitant height, especially in the *Roman Catholic* religion, which certainly much more resembles ⁿ *Paganism* than *Christianity*.

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ⁿ On this subject consult a learned and very ingenious letter from *Rome*, by the Reverend *Conyers Middleton*, D. D. and Principal Librarian of *Cambridge*.

THE contrivers of *Popery* have, without any shame or scruple, selected all the most lucrative, and not a few of the most senseless and impious parts of the ancient *Heathen* worship; to these they added some peculiar absurdities of their own, and then called this mis-shapen mass by the name of the *Christian* religion. Although *Popery* is, doubtless, one of the most impudent attempts against common sense, and one of the greatest insults upon mankind, that ever was made; yet such is the cunning of some, and the folly and credulity of others, that the professors of this religion are not only vastly more numerous than any other denomination of *Christians*, but perhaps more so than those of all other denominations put together.

IN order to lay a sure foundation for this religion, the *ecclesiastical* architects found it necessary first to establish the infallibility of the church, that is, of the priesthood, and strengthen it with persecution. On this rock is the church of *Rome* built: without such a foundation, as some bungling workmen, to their great disappointment, have experienced, it was impossible to build securely with the like materials. But when this grand and essential point of infallibility, with a power of exercising wholesome severities on gainfayers, were

were obtained by the priesthood, it was then easy for them to impose on mankind as they pleased, and fix the greatest merit on what would contribute most effectually to the carrying on their scheme.

ONE of the principal, and most meritorious means, which these infallible guides have laid down for attaining salvation, is faith.

THE reasonableness and expediency of believing what appears to us true, or probable, is plain enough; but how comes this to be meritorious? It may indeed be proper, that we should use our endeavours to find out the truth in all things, which come within the compass of our understandings, and more especially in those which nearly concern us; and it is undoubtedly necessary that we should acknowledge truth when we have discovered it; but wherein the merit of believing according to evidence, that is, believing as we cannot help believing, consists, I am at a loss to find out. But to do the church of *Rome* justice, it must be acknowledged this is not the faith which she principally requires, or places the greatest merit in; it is believing such things as are not within the compass of our understandings, or do not at all relate to us; or such as are contrary to the evidence of

our senses, and in their own nature absolutely impossible. This is, in effect, the faith the church of *Rome* demands, and tells the world that God requires of them, on pain of eternal damnation.

It is very easy to perceive, that this kind of faith, though abominable in the sight of God, and all honest men, being absolutely necessary to support this church, may be greatly meritorious with her; and therefore no wonder she uses so many methods to cheat or compel people into it. But certainly there are few points in which men deceive themselves more than in those relating to faith: for if they cannot believe a proposition they do not understand, or a fact which to them appears impossible or improbable, what numbers of articles of faith, as they are commonly called, do men daily declare their belief of, which are not really believed at all?

THE truth is, that great part of the world, through laziness, interest, fear, or other mean considerations, pretend to believe, and some even fancy they really do believe, many things they have never examined, nor have any clear ideas of; thus putting the cheat both upon themselves and others: nay, so infatuated are they, that it is esteemed a sin to doubt of, or
freely

freely enquire into, the truth of such articles as are acknowledged very abstruse, and yet pretended to be of the utmost consequence to them. If all articles of faith were impartially, freely, and thoroughly examined, (as most certainly they ought to be) what surprising effects would this produce? How many people would then find their own creeds as absurd and ridiculous, as they have hitherto seen only those of others to be?

WHEN the incredibility of miracles pretended to be wrought by *Romish* saints, is objected to the professors of that religion, they tell us, that the seeming impossibility of these things, and our not knowing how they can be brought about, are no good reasons against believing them to be true: for there are, say they, in nature, many surprising phænomena which are generally credited, though the causes of them cannot be accounted for. Thus, as certain wonderful effects, produced by nature, are believed, because the facts are manifest, though the causes are hidden; therefore miracles, contrary to nature, must be also believed, notwithstanding the facts are absolutely unknown, and perhaps impossible to be proved, to those whose faith in them is required. Let us see a person cured of a distemper by the application of a saint's bones,

or

or a crucifix ; or a man really dead brought to life again ; let us see these as fairly done, and have as plain proof of them, as any man may have of the operations of a loadstone on iron, or the experiments on electrical bodies, and we shall certainly give equal credit to them.

BUT unbelievers are not, it seems, favoured with a sight of miracles ; they are only performed among the faithful : now a reasonable man would think, that the chief end of miracles was to convince gainfayers, and therefore should be much more commonly wrought among them, than such who are already established in the faith, and consequently do not stand in need of such extraordinary proofs. The truth is, that they who are willing to be cheated, or at least entertain such a reverence for these strange things, and are so disposed to believe them, that they do not take sufficient care not to be deceived, may be put off with sham miracles ; but such persons who look narrowly into these matters, and would very probably detect the impostures, are not to be trusted with a sight of them.

BESIDES what is above-mentioned, there is another answer frequently given to objections against miracles ; which is, that God, who is
almighty,

almighty, can do all things. But the question on this subject is not what an omnipotent Being can do, but what he really does; and what purpose these wonderful feats would answer? Supposing all the legends and miracles, reported by the church of *Rome*, were true, what would they prove? Not that the same body can be in several places at the same time; not that persecution for religion, and massacres, are good and meritorious actions: all the miracles pretended to have been done, if they were ever so certain, cannot prove any of these. Miracles may indeed demonstrate the great power of that Being by whom they are performed, and, if they are beneficial, his goodness; but they cannot cause things to be different from what they are; they cannot make two and two five; they cannot demonstrate vice to be good, nor virtue to be bad.

ANOTHER great misfortune attends all miracles, the truth of which is not warranted to us by divine authority. For what proof can be sufficient to induce a sensible person to believe them, but being himself an eye-witness? Suppose a thousand people concurred in reporting, that they had seen a man who died, was buried, and his corps become putrid, raised to life. What judicious person, who
had

had never himself been witness to a miracle, could believe this was true? Would not such a one much sooner conclude, that these people were themselves deceived, or that they intended to deceive him, than give credit to this story. But supposing the fact was only related by tradition, or in books, though with ever such strong circumstances, to have happened many ages since; would not all unbigotted, sensible men, treat it with the greatest contempt, and rank it with the account of *Romulus's* ascent into heaven; *Castor* and *Pollux's* appearing on white horses in the *Roman* army, which, by their assistance, was said to gain a great victory; and a thousand other such-like fables.

THE reverend doctor *Middleton*, in his letter from *Rome* °, very justly observes, that this last-mentioned miracle has as authentick an attestation, as any which the *Papists* can produce; the decree of a senate to confirm it; a temple erected in consequence of it; visible marks of the fact on the spot where it was transacted; (*viz.* the marks of the horses hoofs on a rock at *Regillum*, where *Castor* and *Pollux* first appeared) and all this supported by the concurrent testimony of the best authors of antiquity; amongst whom *Dionysius*
of

of *Halicarnassus* says, that there were subsisting in his time, at *Rome*, many evident proofs of its reality, besides a yearly festival, with a solemn sacrifice and procession in memory of it: yet, for all this, as the doctor observes, these stories were but the jest of men of sense, even in the times of *Heathenism*, and seem so extravagant to us now, that we wonder there could ever be any so simple as to believe them.

IF miracles, not attested by divine authority, will admit of no sufficient proof to the unbigotted judicious part of the world, but their being eye-witnesses of them; then such miracles must be very frequent, and be seen by multitudes of people, or they happen to very little purpose, and nothing firm or solid can be built on them.

CERTAINLY it would redound much more to the honour of the church of *Rome*, and all other churches, to require the belief only of such doctrines and facts as are credible, than to invent false stories concerning miracles, to make people believe what is absurd or impossible.

NOTWITHSTANDING the church of *Rome* recommends faith as a most excellent virtue,
and

and places great merit in it, yet contrary to all other virtues, men may possess it in the highest degree, and yet be not at all the better; nay, are oftentimes much the worse for it. The vilest criminals are very seldom without a large measure of faith; and the devils also believe and tremble; but still they are devils. If men are humane, just, or charitable, they are so far at least good; nay, they who are thus virtuous, seldom are in any respect very bad men: but this cannot be said concerning multitudes of the firmest and most extensive believers; for they may be nevertheless, and often are, some of the worst of men: their believing not only frequently demonstrates their weakness and folly, but also greatly promotes their ill actions: for the unboundedness of faith always proceeds from the narrowness of mens understandings; and their bad lives are much encouraged by flattering themselves, that an orthodox belief will atone for the vilest crimes though they are not forsaken.

BESIDES the merit laid on faith, the church of *Rome* has also placed a considerable share on what she calls good works, and among them has vouchsafed to admit certain acts of morality; but that these are considered only of a subordinate nature, is evident from this:

breaches

breaches of morality are easily commuted for; nay, the most flagrant, such as rapine, murder, and massacres, when they are committed for the service of the church ^p, are even sanctified, and become highly meritorious: whereas the denying any doctrine, or article of faith, which the church hath thought fit to establish, however absurd, or contradictory to reason, is in *Roman* Catholick countries, or at least with those that are cursed with an inquisition, punishable with death here, and if those men are to be believed, will be punished with everlasting torments hereafter? But one of the good works principally enjoined, and of great merit, is giving much to the church: this, which is called charity, will atone for a multitude of sins.

THE inventors of this abominable scheme of religion, having observed how unwilling men are to regulate their passions, or mortify their favourite vices of pride, deceit, envy, revenge,

^p It is well known, that some of those wretches who attempted to blow up king *James* the first, and both houses of parliament, for which they were deservedly hanged, were sainted by the church of *Rome*: and in the pope's palace of the *Vatican*, are three large pictures to preserve the memory of the massacre at *Paris*, and a medal for the same purpose, with the head of pope *Gregory* the thirteenth on one side, and on the reverse an angel with a cross in one hand, and a sword in the other, with heaps of slaughtered bodies at his feet, and this motto, *Ugonotterum Strages*. 1572.

revenge, cruelty, &c. have so contrived it as to indulge people in these enormities, and turn them to the great emolument of the church, by granting absolution on mens submitting to certain penances, or pecuniary mulcts, which they much more readily comply with, than part with their darling sins.

BUT if any are desirous to attain a more than ordinary pitch of holiness, there are two principal methods proposed for obtaining it: one is to convert infidels or hereticks, either by verbal arguments, or, if they have power, by the wholesome and more effectual means of cruelty and persecution; for this purpose many compass heaven and earth: and if, where they have not power openly to persecute others, they themselves happen to be put to death, though for the most execrable crimes, perpetrated for the propagation of their religion; such are immediately dubbed saints or martyrs, and crowned with glory by the church. The other method is to be secluded from the world, deny themselves innocent natural pleasures, and make a vow never to propagate their species.

THUS some, by taking up the profession of saints errant, and foolishly throwing away their own lives, or wickedly persecuting, and
perhaps

perhaps murdering their fellow-creatures; and others, by becoming useleſs to the world, and acting contrary to the voice of God in nature, (which undoubtedly is to men the moſt certain voice of God) imagine they ſhall attain the greateſt degree of purity, and the higheſt favour with their Creator.

THERE are, beſides the foregoing, many other inventions of this church for purifying the hearts and conſciences of men, and rendering them acceptable to the Deity. Holy water is of ſovereign virtue^q, ſo is praying, though in an unknown tongue, ſometimes to

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God,

^q “ Holy water is in conſtant uſe among *Roman* Catholics: for no body goes in or out of the church, but is either ſprinkled by the prieſt, who attends for that purpoſe on ſolemn days, or elſe ſerves himſelf with it from a veſſel, uſually of marble, placed juſt at the door. But this divine ſpecific (holy water) is not uſed only to purify mankind, and caſt out devils, and chaſe away all illuſions, and wickedneſs, and crafty wiles of ſatan, but horſes, aſſes, and other cattle, are alſo purified and bleſſed therewith.”

Vide *Doctor Middleton's Letter from Rome*.

“ In the reign of *Edward* the fixth, biſhop *Gardiner* writ a letter to *Ridley* in defence of holy water. *Ridley* denied that holy water can have any force to drive away devils. In answer to this, *Gardiner* cites a paſſage out of the *Hiſtoria Tripartita*, importing, that biſhop *Marcellus* ordered his deacon *Equitius* to throw conſecrated water upon an ill apparition in *Jupiter's* temple, and that the devil could not ſtand againſt this application, but immediately vaniſhed. Biſhop *Gardiner* adds, that our Saviour promiſed the

“ church,

God, much oftener to images, and dead men and women : going frequently to mass is an indispensable duty : if you do not understand a word that is said, you may nevertheless be much edified by seeing the priest, that ecclesiastical juggler, play as many tricks as one of his lay-brethren with cups and balls, but much outdoing him in impudence ; for the lay-trickster deceives your senses before he attempts to impose upon your understanding ; but the other imposes on your understanding against the evidence of your senses. A great reverence for relicks^r, consisting of bones,

and

“ church, that in his name they should cast out devils. The
 “ force of this effect (says he) is to be attributed to the name
 “ of God ; but the question is, Whether the element of
 “ water may not be instrumental in conveying this superna-
 “ tural virtue. In proof of the affirmative, he urges the
 “ hem of our Saviour’s garment, the spittle and clay laid
 “ upon the eyes of the blind, and St. *Peter*’s shadow curing
 “ those that came under it. From hence he proceeds to a
 “ modern instance, of our kings curing the falling sickness,
 “ and other distempers, by crampings. Now, says he,
 “ though the metal of gold and silver cannot, by its own
 “ nature, produce such an effect, yet by the prayer of con-
 “ secration it is raised to the force of a means, and made a
 “ conveyance of the blessing. By parity of reason, water,
 “ when the preparatory ceremonies of the church have passed
 “ upon it, may be, as it were, a vehicle for a miraculous
 “ remedy.” (Is not this, as it were, a most excellent and
 convincing argument ?) *Collier’s Ecclesiastical History of*
Great-Britain, Vol. II.

^r Mr. *Collier*, in his *Ecclesiastical History of Great-Britain*
 Vol. II. gives us an account of the following relicks in the

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and empty skulls of saints, rotten pieces of wood, old shoes, and rusty nails, is mighty useful, so also are pilgrimages; but above all, confess your sins to a poor sinful creature, such

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reign of *Henry* the eighth. The blessed virgin's girdle was to be seen in seven different places, and her milk in eight. The bell of *St. Gutblac*, and the felt of *St. Thomas of Lancaster*, were accounted sovereign remedies for the head-ach. This *Thomas* earl of *Lancaster*, was one of the rebellious barons in *Edward* the second's time, and executed for high-treason. The pen-knife and boots of archbishop *Becket*, and a piece of his shirt, were very much valued by women with child. The coals that roasted *St. Laurence*, two or three heads of *St. Ursula*, *Malchius's* ear, and the parings of *St. Edmund's* nails, were in great veneration. To these relicks the author adds the figure of an angel with one wing, which brought over the spear's head that pierced our Saviour's side. An image of our lady, with a taper in her hand, which burnt nine years together without wasting; but at last was put out by perjury. We shall omit several rarities, and conclude with a relick at *Hales* in *Gloucestershire*, where the blood of our Saviour, brought from *Jerusalem*, had been kept for several ages. If a man was in mortal sin, and had not received absolution, he could not see the relick, which otherwise to a person under pious qualifications was visible enough. To prepare therefore for the sight of the miracle, it was the custom to confess to a priest, and offer at the altar, before the relick was shewn. This pretended blood of our Saviour was kept in a chrystal, very thick on one side, but very thin and transparent on the other. If a wealthy person appeared, they turned the thick side, when the eye could see nothing; which was done to open his heart and his pocket: for when he had bought as many masses, and presented as much as they thought fit, they turned the thin side, and then the blood appeared. And this, as *William Thomas*, clerk of the council to *Edward* the sixth, says, was no better than the blood of a duck renewed every week.

a one as yourself, or perhaps much worse; and obtain absolution from him; then receive from his holy hands, what he calls the blessed sacrament, (or rather part of it, for the priest sips up the liquor) consisting of a bit of bread, and a little wine mingled with water, transubstantiated into the very flesh and blood of Jesus Christ: (the whole of the same body, by this means, being necessarily supposed to occupy vast variety of different places at the same time) this eating the flesh, and drinking the blood of God, if the priest vouchsafe his good intention with it, is found to be of wonderful efficacy, and indeed the *sine qua non* of salvation.

To sum up the whole: What does the *Roman* Catholick religion principally consist in? 1st. Faith in some doctrines absurd, and in one article at least, absolutely impossible. 2^{dly}. In the practice of many things ridiculous, others contrary to the dictates of nature, destructive of all morality, and most flagrantly wicked: and what do these doctrines and practices produce? Infinite mischiefs. The impoverishing of countries by maintaining vast numbers of monasteries, abbies, and other religious houses, wherein immense riches stagnate, and multitudes of men and women become unhappy in themselves, and entirely
useless

useless to the publick: these, with inquisitions, (the most wicked and cruel judicatories ever invented) various kinds of persecution, wars, and massacres, are what they produce in this world; and in the world to come, according to the accounts given by *Roman Catholics* themselves, this religion teaches, that after all that men can do here to gain or merit the favour of God, his most devout worshippers, a few favourites excepted, and even poor innocent children who happen to die unbaptized, are cast into purgatory, there to endure inexpressible torments for many ages: and upon all who come not within the pale of this church, these good people have charitably pronounced a sentence of eternal damnation.

WHAT a God have these men set up to be worshipped! and what a religion have they invented and established! Surely we may say with *Plutarch*, that the atheist, who denies a God, does him less dishonour than the man who owns his being; but at the same time believes him to be cruel, hard to please, and terrible to human nature.

UNDOUBTEDLY the monstrous accounts too often given of the Deity, and the passions of anger, hatred, cruelty, &c. by some men

ascribed to him, have contributed more than a little to increase the number of atheists ; for persons of a very moderate share of understanding, can easily see the absurdity of supposing such a God, and therefore foolishly conclude there is no God.

IT would be endless to enumerate and describe all the several religions of different countries, and the multitude of sects into which almost all religions are divided. Travellers give an account of some nations who professedly worship the devil ; and there are others, who, though they bestow a different appellation on the object of their devotions, yet describe him in such a manner, as shews that the difference is only in name. For those that worship a being, who gives forth laws which cannot be understood ; who requires the belief of what is incredible ; commands what is impracticable ; and punishes his creatures with everlasting torments, for not performing impossibilities, certainly worship an evil dæmon.

CHRISTIANITY it self is divided and subdivided into innumerable sects, each of which charges all the others with gross, and many times fundamental errors ; and there is scarcely any species of folly, madness, or wickedness, that

that has not, by some of these sects, been taught and practised under the name or pretence of religion. Sighing, groaning, weeping, and wailing, convulsive motions and distortions of the body, with such austerities, self-punishments^s, voluntary miseries, and other wild freaks, as could proceed from nothing but deceit, or enthusiastick distraction, have been deemed necessary parts of religious exercise: and some nonsensical incoherent rhapsodies, uttered in fits of frenzy, have been obtruded on the world, and frequently taken for revelations and prophecies: dreams of men asleep, as well as of those awake, have passed currently for divine manifestations of the will of God. Many people's devotion, especially of the female sex, has consisted principally in raptures and extasies of love: but these, how spiritual or religious so-

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* Among innumerable examples which might be given of this kind of religious lunacy, two may suffice. There are monks in *Russia*, who imagine they perform a most acceptable service to God, by remaining naked whole days and nights, up to their chins in water, while it freezes. And it is recorded of St. *Theresa*, a *Spanish* lady of a noble family, as instances of great and meritorious piety, that she lived for a considerable time only on sallets which were produced in gardens; but becoming uneasy at eating what was cultivated by art, she afterwards, for the remainder of her life, subsisted only on such herbs as grow naturally in the fields: it was also her constant practice to sleep only on faggots, with a stone for her pillow.

ever in the beginnings, have commonly ended, with both sexes, in such carnal and wicked practices, as have been a disgrace to human nature. Others have fancied that Christ was coming personally to rule on earth; that all other government must be demolished, and that God had commanded them (his saints) to kill and destroy those who would not submit to king Jesus.

SURELY nothing has conduced more to degrade mankind, and to set great part of them in a most contemptible light, than the belief of such fables, and the practice of such absurdities as constitute the very essence of false religion: and it is notorious, that whenever zeal for false devotion has been most epidemick, and men have had the strongest fits of it, then several vices and wicked actions, particularly hypocrisy, deceit, persecution, and cruel religious wars, have most abounded.

AN inquiry here seems very natural, how it has happened, that the greatest part of mankind, in all ages and nations of the world, have entertained such unworthy and terrible notions of a deity, and laid down such preposterous methods of worshipping and pleasing him. To this it may be answered, that
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the professors of all false religions, are properly divided into two sorts; such who have been deceived themselves, and such who have endeavoured to deceive others: the first too frequently imagined their gods altogether like the worst of men, capricious, proud, ill-natured, cruel, and revengeful: the second, set up such gods, and contrived such forms of worship, as were most likely to suit the tempers and humours of the people, and gain for the traders in religion, riches, power, and dominion. To which may be added, that when opinions concerning a deity, or the means of worshipping him, are once established, the generality of men never inquire into the truth or reasonableness of them, but endeavour to strengthen their belief with all the arguments they can devise: or if some few venture to controvert these matters, they commonly do it too superficially, not examining deep enough, to the root of errors or deceits.

FEAR and ignorance have begot superstition, superstition false religion; but priests were the nurses that brought up the hopeful babe: they have ever been solicitous for its thriving, and indeed the amazing growth of the child has more than answered the most sanguine expectations of its foster-fathers, though

though nothing could exceed their insatiable desires.

BUT it is past all controversy, that *Roman* Catholic priests have conducted their designs with more dexterity, and accordingly have succeeded much better in them than those of any other false religion: they have made provision for all sorts of tempers. For gloomy, splenetick, half-distracted people, there are re-cluse orders provided, with monasteries, convents, and hermitages in lonely deserts, or on desolate rocks and mountains: for others of different complexions, there are orders of more liberty framed, with abbies and other religious houses of noble architecture, in the most delightful situations, where the pretendedly meek, mortified followers of Jesus keep their horses and their hounds, their coaches and their whores, and are served in nothing but plate^t. For melancholy people, who chuse
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^t The following extract, from a surrender made by the prior and monks of *St. Andrews* in *Northampton*, of their abbey, at the dissolution of monasteries in the reign of *Henry* the VIIIth, and given under their hands, may serve to shew what truly religious and mortified lives these holy men, according to their own confession, lived.

“ But as well we, as others our predecessors, called religious persons within your said monastery, taking on us
“ the habite of outward vesture of the said rewle, only to the
“ intent to lead our liffes in the ydle quyetnesse, and not in
“ the vertuose exercyse, in a stately estimation, and not in
“ obedient

not to enter into religious orders, there are dismal stories and objects invented to suit their tempers: for those of gayer dispositions are provided

“ obedient humlyte, have under the shadowe or color of the
“ faide rewle and habite, vaynely, detestably, and also un-
“ godly, employed, yea, rather devowred the yerely revenues
“ yssuing and comyng of the faide possessions, in continual
“ ingurgitations and farynges of our carayne bodies, and of
“ others, the supportares of ovr voluptuose and carnal ap-
“ petyte, with other vayne and ungodly expensys; and to
“ the manyfest subversion of devocion, and clenness of liv-
“ ing, and to the moost notable flaunder of Christ’s evangely,
“ which in the form of our professyon, we did ostentate, and
“ openly devaunt to kepe moost exactly; withdrawing there-
“ by from the simple and pure minds of yowr grace’s subjects,
“ the only truth and comfort which they oughte to have by
“ the true faith of Christ, and also the devyne honor and
“ glory, onely due to the glorious majesty of God Almighty,
“ steyring them with all persuacions, ingynes, and polyce, to
“ dedd images, and counterfeit reliqucs, for our damnable
“ lucre: which our moost horryble abominations and exe-
“ crable persuacions of yowr grace’s people to detestable er-
“ rours, and our long coveted ypocrisie cloked with fayned
“ sanctity, we revolvyng dayly, and continually ponderyng
“ in our sorrowful harts, and thereby perseyving the bottom-
“ las gulf of everlastyng fyre redye to devoure us, if persystyng
“ in this state of livyng, we shulde depart from this uncertyn
“ and transitory liffe, constrayned by the intollerable anguysh
“ of our conscience, called as we trust by the grace of God,
“ who wold have no man perysh in synne, with harts moost
“ contrited and repentante, prostrate at the noble feet of yowr
“ moost royal majesty, moost lamentably doe crave of yowr
“ highness, of yowr abundant mercy to grant unto us, moost
“ greivous against God and yowr highness, yowr moost graci-
“ ous pardon, for our faide fundry offences, omyssions, and
“ negligences, commytted as before by us is confessed against
“ yowr highness, and yowr moost noble progenitors,” &c.

Signed by the prior, sub-prior, and eleven other monks.

Collier’s Ecclesiastical History of Great-Britain, Vol. II.

provided churches and chapels, adorned with statues, pictures, and other ornaments of the most exquisite workmanship; processions, high-masses, (a sort of ecclesiastical operas) and other gay entertainments, wherein the priests act their parts, cloathed with the most sumptuous habits, and are attended with the finest musick. And lastly, for those who are struck with the wonderful pleasure of wondering, there are miracles and lying wonders without number created. The contrivers of this religion have indeed, but in a very bad sense, been all things to all men.

THERE is another question which may naturally arise concerning false religion. Since it is very prejudicial to the publick wherever it prevails, as is in an eminent degree manifest by the *Roman* Catholick religion, which extremely weakens all nations among whom it bears sway, why so great an evil should be so zealously supported by such numbers of princes and states? In answer to this query; undoubtedly the principal reason, besides the ignorance, superstition, and bigotry of many princes and rulers, why false religion is so cherished by them, is, that it serves to subdue the spirits of the people, keep them in awe, and render them more susceptible of slavery: false religion being a mere bawd to lawless power and tyranny.

UPON

UPON the whole it evidently appears, first, That the greatest part of mankind have been in all ages of the world, and still are infected with false religion, which always did, and now doth teach them either to adore spurious deities of their own making or setting up, or to worship the true God in a most absurd manner, altogether unworthy of him, and unbecoming reasonable creatures. Secondly, That certain ecclesiastical merchants have sold to the people, not *wine and milk without money, or without price*, but the most worthless, and indeed the most pernicious merchandize, at the extravagant price of great part of mens substance and happiness. Thirdly, That the fruits of false religion are deceit, hypocrisy, malice, hatred, cruelty, persecution, wars and massacres. May it not therefore be justly said, That among the many errors men have fallen into, or the various cheats they have practised, none seems so generally to have prevailed, continued so long, or been attended with such mischiefs as false religion?

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THE contrivers of false religion, we see, have set up a multitude of counterfeit deities, or propagated most erroneous, unworthy, and indeed blasphemous opinions, concerning the true God ; and accordingly have taught the most absurd methods of worshipping him. In order to make these impostitions pass currently, false miracles, false oracles, and false revelations in abundance have been invented ; and to amuse mankind, make priests more necessary, and gain riches and power for them, vast numbers of religious ceremonies have been created.

MANY ceremonies in religion are like charms in physick : the latter are prescribed as pretended remedies for distempers, and to procure health for the body : the former as atonements for sins, and to obtain salvation for the soul. ABRACADABRA is directed to be worn about the neck for the cure of a *tertian* ague ; sacrifices are to propitiate for crimes, processions to deprecate the anger of God, and holy water is made use of to wash away sin, and cast out the devil. Certainly no means can be less properly suited to the

the ends proposed than these are, and consequently none can be more foolish and ridiculous : but it would be well if they were only foolish and ridiculous ; they are also extremely mischievous : for as a dependence upon charms, and other quack-remedies, for the cure of distempers, generally prevents the patient from making use of such methods and medicines as might restore him to health, by which means his life is many times lost, so the practice of useless ceremonies in religion, and a belief in their efficacy, cause men to neglect what is really their duty, and would be of the greatest benefit to them. Thus men are taught, by knaves and fools, to catch at shadows, whereby they lose the substance.

HOWEVER the various kinds of false religions may differ in other respects, yet they all seem to agree in this, that the Deity is rather to be worshipped by certain institutions which men have invented to please him, though of no intrinsic use or value ; than with such actions as are really beneficial to mankind. To such a degree of madness have many carried this point, that they believe God may be acceptably worshipped and served by cruelties exercised on their fellow-creatures. But we may be assured, as it is great weakness, and derogates from the honour of God, to suppose
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that he has required of men to practise what is not apparently for their benefit; so it is highly wicked and impious to teach, that our Creator hath commanded, as a duty, what is injurious and destructive to mankind.

MENS being taught to believe, that the practice of certain carnal ordinances, which generally consist in meats and drinks, and divers washings, will carry them to heaven, seems nearly to resemble the trick put upon *Don Quixote* and *Sancho Pancha*, who were made to fancy they could ride through the region of the air upon a wooden horse: the poor knight and 'squire being placed on the machine, were first hood-winked, then the contrivers of the cheat cried out, "Now, now, they fly aloft, they mount and soar!" But the simple couple never stirred an inch, 'till their horse, which was stuffed full of fireworks, bursting into pieces, threw its riders, who were miserably finged and bruised.

NOTWITHSTANDING many ceremonies in religion are as useless as *Don Quixote's* wooden horse, yet what disputes, contentions, bloodshed, and cruel wars have they caused in the world? One church or sect strenuously insisting that certain ceremonies are commanded by God, and absolutely necessary to please him;

him; whilst others condemn those very performances as superstitious, ridiculous, or impious.

SINCE this is the case respecting ceremonial worship, and such tragical effects have attended the differences about it, how happy would it be for us, to fix on some religion, that may consist in a reasonable service of our Creator, and concerning which all men may agree that it is pure and undefiled? A religion worthy of God to institute, and rational creatures to believe and practice.

THE scripture informs us, ^u *That pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father, is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.*

UNDOUBTEDLY the religion which is most acceptable to God, consists in the performance of that which is most serviceable to mankind: and what can be so beneficial to them as the practice of virtue?

THAT virtue is acceptable to God, and absolutely necessary to the happiness of mankind, men are generally agreed. What need have we then to say, Who shall ascend into heaven

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^u Epistle of James, chap. i. ver. 27.

to bring the law of God from above? Or who shall descend into the deeps to bring it from beneath? Or what reason have men to differ about modes of worship? Our way lies plain before us. No one can doubt whether temperance, fortitude, justice, mercy, the love of our country, and benevolence to mankind, are our duties. These virtues, and indeed all virtues, are not only our duty, as they are absolutely necessary to the good of society, but the practice of them is also the interest of every individual, and that which will afford men more solid pleasure and happiness, than the indulging in any vice.

HERE, then, is a religion that requires the belief of no absurdities, nor unintelligible mysteries: this is a law written in mens hearts, which needs no comments nor explanations: every man who acts agreeable to this law of nature and virtue, sees the reasonableness, and feels the benefit of it.

WHATEVER nature, or the author of nature hath designed, is always performed by the most proper means. That which nature hath principally intended respecting mankind, is the preservation of the individual, and the continuance of the species: for these purposes, such appetites are implanted in men,

as most effectually answer the ends ; and the moderate gratification of these, is justly reckoned among the greatest pleasures of sense. In like manner, the worship or service that God requires of men, is the practice of virtue, which as it is absolutely necessary for the well-being of society, so it affords the highest pleasure that the mind of man is capable of.

THAT we may, in the clearest light, see the difference between what is real, respecting religion, and what is fictitious ; and the consequence of obeying what is of God, and what is only of man ; let us suppose, that, in a *Roman* Catholick country, people should no more confess their sins to priests : then the laity would be under no necessity of revealing their secrets, nor making priests masters both of those and their consciences. Supposing these people should also abstain from receiving what they call the sacrament, and deny the corporal presence. In that case they would get rid of what *Roman* Catholicks have rendered a burdensome piece of superstition, and deny a monstrous absurdity. Again, if people should refuse to go to mass, with-hold their contributions from the church, and resume the estates of which they have been cheated and pillaged ? then they might employ their time and money to much better purposes, and

priests would be under a necessity of going to some useful and honest employments.

WE will next suppose (what is far from being impossible) that a nation should be extremely punctual in performing those things which are commonly called positive duties in religion, but totally neglect the practice of temperance, justice, and mercy. Such a people would be a set of most abandoned wretches: no true pleasure or happiness could subsist among them, and they would run the utmost risk of being destroyed by one another. In the first of these cases, the not conforming to certain religious institutions of mens contriving, we see no prejudice, but indeed, manifest benefits would ensue; but in the other, that of not practising virtue, which is the law of God and nature, notwithstanding the strictest adherence to ceremonies, it is plain that the most terrible evils, and even destruction itself, would be the consequence.

IT evidently appears then, that multitudes of ceremonies, practised in many religions, are not only useless, but extremely pernicious; that doing good to our fellow-creatures is worshipping God acceptably; that vice is the bane of happiness, and virtue the great promoter of it.

A P P E N D I X

To this NEW EDITION:

Being Principally

*An ANSWER to some OBJECTIONS against
the Essay* on FALSE RELIGION.*

SOME worthy persons, who have expressed their approbation of the moral and political parts of this miscellaneous production, having excepted against the foregoing *Dissertation on False Religion*, the author would willingly give such all the satisfaction in his power.

THE principal objections which he hath met with against this small treatise, are, *first*, That religious sacrifices are not, as therein represented, either cruel or ridiculous. *Secondly*, That the author appears to entertain a very slight opinion concerning the necessity or credibility of miracles. *Thirdly*, That this essay was written against religion, to make it appear unreasonable and ridiculous.

FIRST, as to sacrifices: those mentioned were the slaughtering of men or beasts to appease

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* In the first edition it was so intitled.

appease the anger of the gods, and obtain pardon for sins.

UNDOUBTEDLY all *Christians* will acknowledge, that the offering up of human creatures by idolaters, for such purposes, was a most abominable and barbarous action; but the sacrificing of mere animals, is said to have been a very proper oblation even to the true God, and not more cruel than killing those creatures for food, which is our daily practice.

To this I answer: If the flesh of animals be absolutely necessary for our subsistence, that may excuse or warrant the killing those we cannot do without, but this will not prove there is no cruelty in killing them for a superstitious use, which is not only unnecessary, but for a very bad purpose also. Indeed the practice itself arises from cruelty; for if men had not delighted in blood, they never could have imagined the Deity had done so. This manner of worship therefore appears not only cruel, but impious also, as by implication, at least, it ascribes barbarity to our Creator. And as to sacrifices in general being ridiculous, pray what can be more so than to believe the Deity pleased with the fumes of broiled or burned flesh and fat of animals? or with a present of turtle-doves, or young pigeons? or

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the tenth part of an ephah of fine flour? Surely such a kind of devotion must have been ridiculous if performed even to the imaginary gods of the *Heathen*: how much more so then in the highest degree, when addressed to the real Creator of the universe? However silly the poor ignorant deluded people might look when they offered these VAIN OBLATIONS, one would think the cunning priests had enough to do to keep their countenances.

SUPPOSE a very wise and mighty prince maintained a number of indigent people, and enacted laws whereby they were to be governed; and, when any of these people had trespassed against his institutions, they should throw some of the victuals he gave them into the fire to make a sweet favour unto their lord; or send him a piece of their beef, or their veal, or their lamb, or some of their flour, to atone for their faults: or *take a live goat, and one of the people should lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all their iniquities, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness: and then believe, that the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities, unto a land not inhabited* *. Should

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* *Leviticus*, xvi. 21, 22.

any people act in this manner, by such a prince, what would he, and all other sensible persons, think of them? Undoubtedly, either that they intended to burlesque and affront their benefactor, or were a parcel of ideots or madmen. But if it were pretended this prince had given orders for these things to be done, and declared, that upon the people's compliance, he would pardon all their crimes; would any person, of one grain of understanding, believe such a wise prince commanded such foolish pranks to be played? And especially, that he placed the greatest merit upon, and annexed a reward principally to their faith that he had so done?

THIS simile, it must be acknowledged, falls infinitely short of the impropriety and ridiculousness of the thing itself, and well it may: for surely nothing can be equal to a belief that such folly should proceed from the fountain of wisdom.

AN eminent author and divine hath acknowledged, that sacrifices “ did not prevail “ from any dictate of reason ; it being evident “ (says he) that UNPREJUDICED reason never “ could antecedently dictate, that destroying “ the best of our fruits and creatures, could “ be an office acceptable to God, BUT QUITE

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"THE CONTRARY". "For" as he adds in another place, "the destruction of innocent and useful creatures, is against reason, and against nature". Notwithstanding all which, and because they are so, this writer has taken much pains to prove, that sacrifices were a most reasonable service, and of divine appointment. One of his proofs, and as he calls it, "a new evidence of the wisdom of God in this institution," at first, is that *Adam* and *Eve* being naked, the skins of the creatures so slain were to serve them for cloathing.

AFTER several other arguments of equal weight, he thus expresses himself: "I cannot, without indignation, reflect upon the blind and insolent vanity of those wretched mortals, who with such blasphemous and shocking temerity, set themselves to ridicule every institution of God, which the corruption or narrowness of their own heads and hearts, hath made them incapable of comprehending! Whereas a very moderate degree of understanding, enlightened by a very moderate degree of learning and reflection, would naturally, and almost necessarily, teach them the adorable wisdom and goodness of every such institution".

BUT

* *Religion examined with Candour*, p. 128.

† *Idem*, p.

131.

* *Idem*, p. 147.

† *Idem*, p. 154.

BUT pray, reverend sir, why all this indignation against men for not believing that God should institute, what you, with so prodigious a degree of understanding, and enlightened by a more prodigious degree of learning ; and, as evidently appears, heated with zeal still many degrees beyond them both, allow to be (they are your own words, sir) “ a rite so cruel, and “ so contrary to reason and nature ^b.”

THIS whole dissertation is a remarkable instance, what wretched arguments men are forced to make use of, when they endeavour to prove that God acts contrary to reason and nature ; and how much beneath themselves, very ingenious authors write, when that is their design.

WHOEVER is disposed to form a just judgment concerning sacrifices, is recommended to read, if he can have so much patience, (for it is indeed no small task) the first seventeen chapters of *Leviticus*, and if they do not make him heartily sick of sacrifices, he must have a very extraordinary digestion indeed.

THE real state of the case seems to be this. In antient times, long before priests kept splendid tables, and had their ragoos and fri-cassees, they were desirous to get roast meat,

&c.

^b *Religion examined with Candour*, p. 132, 133;

&c. (criticks will say broiled meat) at free cost, and also to make themselves exceeding necessary to the people. With these views they contrived and instituted this cruel, absurd, and abominable, but, to them, gainful method of worship.

BUT absurd as *Jewish* and *Pagan* sacrifices were, some *Christians* have invented, and multitudes of them daily offer, a sacrifice much more absurd and monstrous. *Jews* and *Pagans* sacrificed various creatures to the Deity, or pretended deities, they worshipped: *Popish Christians* first make their God, and then offer him up as a sacrifice to himself.

HOWEVER common and well known this practice may be, the *Protestant* reader will perhaps excuse a short account of such a matchless and shocking procedure; and the *Roman Catholick*, if this should fall into the hands of such a one, may see reason to be ashamed of so ridiculous a fact, and to abhor such an impious institution.

A BAKER makes some bread; the priest takes that and a little wine and water, which by pronouncing a few words, and playing a few tricks over them, he transubstantiates, as he asserts, into the very body, blood, flesh, bones,

bones, sinews, &c. of Christ, that is, as he says, of God. This body of God, is at the same time offered up in thousands of different places, and consequently must occupy, at the same time, thousands of different parts of space; and though broken, and divided among multitudes of people, is, nevertheless, given whole and undivided to each person, who devours his Maker, the Almighty Creator of the universe; and all that is eaten goes of course through the bodily digestions, and the feces passes into the drouth. Reader! hast thou ever met with such a heap of religious absurdities even among the grossest idolaters? Dost thou not tremble at such horrid impiety? Art thou not at a loss which to admire most, the credulity of fools, or the impudence of knaves?

Is this believing and acting like reasonable creatures, or like madmen bereaved of all their senses, and of every grain of understanding? Yet this is the belief and practice of great part of the *Christian* world, and not of the vulgar only, but many of the wise, the learned, and the most acute and knowing^c; who

^c The reader may not perhaps be displeased, to see here an account given, by an eminent and learned *Roman* Catholick, of this article of his faith. He says, That with a faith superior to all sense or reason, he believes that the bread and wine, consecrated by priests, are changed into the body and blood of Christ, “by giving to his body a supernatural manner of existence:”

“by

who are extremely zealous to prove themselves *Cannibals* in the most solemn act of their worship.

I SHALL

“by which, being left without extension of parts, and rendered independent of place, it may be one and the same in many places at once, and whole in every part of the symbols, and not obnoxious to any corporal contingencies.”
A Papist misrepresented and represented, p. 21.

What excellent reason and philosophy are here! A body divested of the essential properties of body, extension of parts and dependence of place, as he expresses it, and yet remains a body.

He then adds, “And this kind of existence is no more than what his (Christ’s) own body had when born, without the least violation of his mother’s virginal integrity.”

As a farther vindication of our author’s believing this monstrous doctrine, and ridiculous miracle of transubstantiation, in another place he says, “And what more absurd, to one that wants faith, than the miracles recounted in the Old Testament? Might not such an one turn them all into ridicule and buffoonry? Take but faith away, and see what becomes of *Balaam* and his ass, *Samson* and his jaw-bone, *Elias* and his fiery chariot, *Elijah*’s mantle, axe’s head and dead bones, *Gideon*’s pitchers, lamps, and trumpets, in demolishing the walls of *Jericho*, *Moses* and his burning bush, his parting of the *Red Sea*, and *Joshua*’s commanding the sun to stand still, &c. Might not these, and all the rest, be painted out as ridiculous as any supposed to be done since Christ’s time? and be put into the same list with the history of *Bevis*, or *Guy of Warwick*?” *Idem* p. 81, and 82.

From all this we may fairly conclude, that although credulity is on every other subject a certain sign of folly, and justly blame-worthy; yet, in religion, our *Roman Catholick* esteems it an infallible proof of wisdom, and highly meritorious. And to demonstrate how wonderful wise he is, it plainly appears that nothing can be too incredible for him to believe. Doubtless if his church had placed the romances of

I SHALL not argue on this subject, to shew the notorious and amazing folly of such opinions and actions ; they are below all argument. It is doing them too much honour to reason about them. Sufficient one would think it should be, barely to lay them before the view of any reader not determined to give himself up to nonsense, delusion, and infatuation.

So much, in this place, for sacrifices,---- which, whether they do not plainly appear to be both cruel and ridiculous, is left to the judgment of every impartial person.

SECONDLY, It is objected, that the author seems to entertain a very slight opinion concerning either the necessity or credibility of any miracles, not warranted to us by divine authority ; and that he thinks no human testimony can be sufficient to prove a miraculous event, not so warranted, to one who did not see it himself.

By a miracle, it is supposed that every one means, a sensible effect contrary to the laws of

of *Bevis* and *Guy of Warwick* in its canon, he would have believed them to be true histories. And his most holy, most excellent, and most humane religion, would have taught him to believe, that all who did not acknowledge them as such, ought to be burnt as obstinate hereticks.

of nature, or beyond the power of nature to perform.

ON this subject of miracles, the writer of these essays presumes to determine nothing, and will therefore only lay a few observations and queries concerning them before the reader, whom he wishes to be unbiaſſed and judicious.

IGNORANCE and ſuperſtition have converted many natural events into miracles; and religious deceit and cunning, operating upon folly and credulity, have given an imaginary being to multitudes of miracles which never were wrought. Thus, not only comets, but even eclipses, and moſt other uncommon phenomena, though as much according to the regular courſe of nature as the riſing and ſetting of the ſun, were believed to be miraculous appearances, and ominous preſages. And many pretendedly blind, lame, and diſeaſed perſons, who ailed nothing, were reported to be cured; legions of devils, not one of which ever exiſted, have been caſt out of thoſe who aſſiſted to carry on the cheat; and the dead have been raiſed long before they deceaſed; --- nay, it has been confidently aſſerted, that not a few, who never lived at all, were reſtored to life.

MANY of the ſaints, ſince the time of the apoſtles, and antient fathers of the church,
have

have reported a multitude of miracles, diverse of which they pretended to be eye-witnesses of: nevertheless all these were undoubtedly no better than pious frauds. Some have told us, "that many were raised from the dead in " their days, in every place where there was " a *Christian* church, and lived afterwards " several years among them^d."

It would be easy to fill volumes with accounts of these and other incredible miracles, but I shall mention only one related by *St. Epiphanius*, " of whom *St. Jerom*, who personally knew him, says, he was the father " of all bishops, and a shining star among " them; the pattern of antient sanctity; the " man of God of blessed memory; to whom " the people used to flock in crowds, offering " their little children to his benediction, kissing " his feet, and catching the hem of his garment." This holy man " declares, that, in " imitation of our Saviour's miracle at *Cana* in " *Galilee*, several fountains and rivers, in his " days, were annually turned into wine. A " fountain of *Cibyra*, a city of *Caria*, says he, " and another at *Gerasa* in *Arabia*, prove the " truth of this. I myself have drunk out of " the fountain of *Cibyra*, and my brethren out " of

^d Doctor *Middleton's* works, Vol. I. preface to his *First Inquiry*, p. 25.

“ of the other at *Gerasa* : and many testify
 “ the same thing of the river *Nile* in *Egypt* *.”

WHAT can we think of men who would invent and report such palpable untruths? The best that can be said for them is,---they intended to serve the cause of religion. But, alas! instead of so doing, they have greatly prejudiced it : for all falsehoods, when detected, or when so notorious as to obtain no credit, are a very great injury to any cause which they are made use of to support.

If nothing were required of people to believe or practice in religion, but what was agreeable to their understandings and reason, would there then be any occasion for miracles? But when men invent strange and improbable facts, and unreasonable and absurd doctrines as articles of faith, for proof of these, they generally recur to other unknown facts equally strange and improbable : thus incredible facts are brought to prove unintelligible doctrines. Are those persons, who pretend these to be convincing evidence, in earnest? Or do those, who receive them as such, make any use of their understandings?

MIRACLES are not necessary to prove the being of a God : the stupendous works of
 H creation

* Idem Vol. p. 123.

creation most apparently demonstrate it ; and the grandeur and harmony of the universe manifest this great truth infinitely better than any pretended contradictions to the laws of nature we have been told of, had they really happened, could possibly have done. Nay, many of these, had they been real, would rather have produced a doubt in mens minds, at least, of the unity, wisdom, and goodness of the Deity.

THERE can be no occasion for miracles to prove that men ought to obey the laws their Creator hath given them ; neither is there any need of miracles to shew unto men what those laws are. For, *What, O man, doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God^f.* These duties may certainly be known without signs or wonders, and so likewise might all those contained in the ten commandments have been.

IF indeed it should be pretended that God requireth burnt-offerings to appease his wrath, there may, as a proof of this, be occasion for *fire to come down from heaven to consume the sacrifice, and also for the glory of the Lord to fill the house^g.* Or if it be necessary to persuade men

^f Micah, iv. 8.

^g 2 Chronicles, vii. 1.

men to worship the virgin *Mary*, or other saints, or confess their sins to priests and receive absolution from them, in order to convince men of these things, miracles are undoubtedly requisite; and so they are likewise to prove that a piece of bread shall really, truly, and substantially be changed into the body and blood of Jesus Christ. And for these most excellent purposes, either a vast multitude of miracles have been performed, or a vast multitude of lies have been told.

THAT the reader may judge whether the former or latter were really the case, a short account of a few of these miraculous performances shall be laid before him.

TRANSUBSTANTIATION hath been proved by real flesh being seen instead of bread, and by the appearance of a child, nay of Christ himself in the form of a child, in the host. Saint *Anthony* of *Padua*'s horse also left his provinder to worship the host, which, says bishop *Stillingfleet*, (ironically we may be sure) he would never have done if he had not seen some notable sight there^h. To which may be added, that upon a *Jew* impiously stabbing his knife into a consecrated wafer, a stream of blood immediately issued from the

H 2

wound.

^h *Of the Fanaticism of the Roman Church.* By bishop *Stillingfleet*, p. 252.

wound. Of this last miracle, the author hath seen a very fine picture in a *Roman* Catholick church, placed there as an attestation, and a memorial of the fact.

IN order to “ add fuel to the fire of devotion” for a faint of our own country, namely St. *Winefrede*, her life was published in the year 1712, and written in a very florid style. The author tells us, and quotes the authorities, as he says, of diverse pious and learned men for the truth of what he relates, that upon this faint refusing to gratify the amorous desires of a prince who was her lover, he, in a rage, as she fled from him towards a church, with his sword cut off her head, “ which falling upon
“ the descent of a hill, rowled down to the
“ church, where the congregation was kneeling before the altar.” St. *Beuno*, who was then in that church preparing to perform mass, after a warm expostulation with the murderer, and an exhortation to the people, “ he joined
“ the sacred head to the pale body, covering
“ both with his cloak ; after which he finished
“ the mass,” and made a pretty long prayer. The pious people having answered devoutly, *Amen*, “ the virgin arose, as newly awaked
“ from sleep ; she wiped her eyes and face to
“ clear away that glorious dust, which had
“ settled on her lovely head when it tumbled
“ towards

“ towards her dear St. *Beuno*.” “ This was,”
 faith the reverend father *Cressy*, “ such a stu-
 “ pendous miracle, as neither the precedent
 “ nor subsequent ages of the church (save that
 “ at St. *Paul*’s decollation) could afford one to
 “ equal.” I shall only add, that St. *Winefrede*
 lived many years after her head was thus set
 on, and performed a vast number of miracles
 during her life, at her death, and since her
 decease, even to the time this author wrote,
 and will doubtless continue to perform them
 just as long as there are devout and bigotted
 fools to believe them.

EVERY person who is acquainted with the
 flaming zeal for the worship of the virgin
Mary, which rages to a prodigious degree of
 madness among *Roman* Catholicks, must know
 there are miracles without number ascribed to
 her. Two or three only shall here be given
 as a sample of them; and those taken from,
An Account of the Life and Death of the
Blessed Virgin, according to Romish Writers,
 &c. printed in 1687, and said, in the title-
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 have been written by the late bishop *Fleetwood*.

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¹ *The Life and Miracles of St. Winefrede, &c. with Obser-*
vations. Printed in 1713.

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ⁱ *The Life and Miracles of St. Winefrede, &c. with Obser-*
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“ nevertheless, to fast every *Saturday* in ho-
 “ nour to the virgin) who at last being caught
 “ in the fact, was beheaded on the spot; his
 “ head, in falling from his body, cried out
 “ thrice, *Confession, Confession, Confession*, upon
 “ which they fetched a priest, who came and
 “ set his head again upon his shoulders, to
 “ whom the thief reported, that as soon as his
 “ head was cut off, the devils had seized on
 “ his soul to drag it into hell, but that the
 “ virgin hindered them, not permitting the
 “ soul and body quite to separate, ’till he was
 “ confessed; and that he had obtained this
 “ grace for fasting every *Saturday* to her ho-
 “ nour: and this” (adds my author) “ serves
 “ to support two articles of *Popery*, the invo-
 “ cation of the virgin, and the necessity of
 “ confession.”

IN the same place you read, “ That the soul
 “ of a soldier killed in fight, continued in his
 “ body many years after the flesh was rotten
 “ and worn off; the blessed virgin not per-
 “ mitting the soul to part before confession,
 “ because he had been all his life-time her
 “ peculiar servant. Another miracle there is,
 “ of which *Pelbart* himself was an eye-wit-
 “ ness. A certain wicked villain fell into the
 “ *Danube*, and was under water three days,
 “ where he heard a voice say to him, Thou
 “ deservest

“deservest well, O wretch, to lose thy life,
 “and be condemned for ever for thy sins,
 “but because thou art a servant to the virgin
 “*Mary*, thou shalt be delivered from this
 “danger, that thou mayest go and be con-
 “fessed; and up he came, though he could
 “not swim a stroke, and came and confessed
 “to *Pelbart* himself, who tells this story ^k.”

THE writer of this *Life and Death of the Virgin Mary*, gives several other relations of miracles, and miraculous appearances of this mother of God ^l, as she is frequently called, which though they might be necessary to shew what monstrous stories these people re-

H 4

late,

^k Page 37, & seq.

^l *Roman* Catholicks do not only give the title of mother of God to the virgin *Mary*, but likewise that of his bride or wife; reserving to her, nevertheless, the power of a mother. In their devotions to her they do not only say, *Te matrem Dei laudamus*, but also, *Te æterni patris SPONSAM, omnis terra venerantur*, i. e. All the earth worship thee, thou WIFE of the Father everlasting. Again, *In die assump. B. M. Tu es pulchra Dei SPONSA, tu regem Christum enixa, domina es in cælo & terra*, i. e. Thou art God's fair BRIDE, thou broughtest forth Christ the king, and art lady in heaven and earth. *A Comparison of Popery and Paganism*, &c. p. 128, and 129.

Respecting the virgin's maternal authority, they ascribe it to her in its full extent, as may be seen in several missals, particularly those printed at *Paris* in 1520 and 1634. COMMAND thy son, say they, by right and authority of a mother: or, as *Fulk* has noted of them, --- COMPEL God to be merciful to sinners. Vide, *The Madness of Disaffection*, &c. By G. Ollyffe, M. A. p. 210, 211, &c.

late, yet the particulars are too immodest to find a place here. I shall therefore only say, in general, that they give account of her marriage with St. *Dominick*, to a young man named *Joseph Herman*, and to *Alanus de Rupibus*, who not only reports these marriages of the virgin to others, but writes of the same amorous intercourse betwixt her and himself. He declares, that “ St. *Dominick* sucked her “ breasts ; that he himself did the like, and “ that she milked them on the wounds the “ devil had made, and cured them perfectly.” She also married her servant, *i. e.* himself, in the presence of Jesus Christ, and a great many saints there present^m, giving him her virgin ring, made of her virgin hair. “ After this, “ she put about his neck a chain or string, “ made likewise of her hair, with a hundred “ and fifty precious stones, according to the “ number of beads in the virgin’s psalter or “ chaplet.” The rest I do not think it decent for me to relate. The author might well ask, “ Has either *Alcoran*, or *Jewish Talmud*,” (he might have mentioned another religious book) “ stories so lewd and so abominable as these?”

HERE

^m These marriages of the virgin *Mary* with the male saints, and Jesus Christ with the female, are in great vogue among *Roman Catholics*. At the *Dominican’s* church at *Bruges* in *Flanders*, the author has seen a capital picture representing the marriage of Christ with St. *Katherine* ; the virgin *Mary* joins their hands, St. *Dominick* performs the marriage ceremony, and king *David* plays upon the harp.

HERE it seems necessary to take notice, that the collector and reviver of these ridiculous and filthy fables was no mean or obscure person, but “ father *Craffet*, a famous Jesuit, in “ the city of *Paris*, where *Popery* is most re- “ fined; and in the face of the bishop of “ *Meaux*, and other Catholics, averse from “ the vulgar superstitions, with the approba- “ tion of his society, his archbishop, and his “ king, *Lewis* the XIVth.”

THUS, when men set up, or endeavour to propagate, false religion and superstitious devotion, they invent or report lying wonders, and incredible (and, as we plainly see, many times, most shocking) tales to support them.

BUT, admitting that a particular manifestation of the mind and will of God be necessary to make known and establish true religion; can we reasonably suppose the Deity would chuse miracles, not verified by divine authority, for this purpose?

“ WISDOM (saith doctor *Clarke*) consists “ principally in two things; in chusing to “ pursue the most excellent ends; and ac- “ complishing those ends by the best and “ fittest means.” The question at present is,

* *Sermons of the Wisdom of God*, Vol. I. p. 301.

is, Whether it be probable that God would make choice of miracles, not verified in the manner above-mentioned, as the best and fittest means to accomplish this end? for were they not the very best and most fit, we may be certain that infinite wisdom would not chuse them. And that they are not, there seem to be many reasons; but to be as brief as possible, a few only shall be here mentioned.

EVIDENCES which can be easily counterfeited, and the counterfeits used for bad purposes, even directly opposite to those the real proofs were intended for, must, in their nature and event, be uncertain, liable to great abuse, and consequently may be of very ill tendency. That this is eminently the case of miracles, every one must allow: the multitude of those which have been forged, or thought to be wrought by evil spirits, evidently demonstrate it. Have they not, either true or false, abounded among *Pagans*, *Roman* Catholicks, almost all sorts of enthusiasts and fanatics? Are they not the principal engines and instruments by which most or all the religious impostures and rogueries that ever appeared in the world, have been carried on and supported. Nay do not the scriptures inform us that miracles were wrought by the
magicians

magicians of *Egypt*, in direct opposition to those performed by *Moses*, at the immediate command of God himself? whereby *Pharoah's* heart was hardened, and the Almighty's orders disobeyed°. And have we not the highest authority, *that there shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders, insomuch that (if it were possible) they shall deceive the very elect*†.

EITHER some of the vast number of miracles recorded in history, or otherwise reported to have been performed by or among idolaters, and those other people above-mentioned, were real, or they were all fictitious: if any were real, then the same means have been used for proving, supporting, and spreading of false religion, as, it is said, are appointed for proving, maintaining, and propagating true religion: but if all these miracles were fictitious, as was undoubtedly the case, what amazing scenes of delusion and imposture have been imposed upon the world! and what human proofs is it possible to give of any miracles which have not been given of many of these? --- Consequently, what dependence is to be placed on such precarious and deceitful evidence?

THESE,

° Exod. vii.

† Matt. xxiv. 24.

THESE, and many other considerations, particularly the incredibility of such things in themselves, gave occasion for the author to ask, what proof could be sufficient to induce a sensible person, except being himself an eye-witness, to believe any miracles not warranted by divine authority?

NOTWITHSTANDING such a multitude of miracles are reported to have been wrought among *Roman* Catholicks, even in our own times, and some surprisingly well attested, yet *Protestants* do not believe one of them. What credit then can we give to any of those said to have happened many years since, unless verified by divine evidence.

MR. *Lock* very justly observes, " That any
" testimony, the farther off it is from the
" being and existence of the thing itself, the
" less force and proof it has. * * * * So that
" in traditional truths, each remove weakens
" the force of the proof; and the more
" hands the tradition has successively passed
" through, the less strength and evidence
" does it receive from them."^a

MIRACLES, not proved in the manner above-mentioned, as we plainly see, being in themselves

^a *Essay concerning Human Understanding*, Vol. II. chap. xvi. p. 283.

themselves so incredible, such uncertain proofs, liable to be so counterfeited, and used to such bad purposes, and certainly then not the best and fittest means to accomplish the ends proposed, is it probable the all-wise God should make use of them? Or is it possible that infinite wisdom can be destitute of methods subject to none of these inconveniencies? --- infallible methods of conveying to his creatures whatsoever he is minded they should know or believe?

THERE are, among many others, two very great mistakes in religion, which people frequently fall into. --- A supposition that God requires them to believe what is above their capacities to apprehend, and to perform what is above their abilities to effect.

MEN have been led into these errors by those who take great pleasure in puzzling others, and one would think themselves also. But the principal motive for mens teaching mysterious doctrines is, that by pretending to explain mysteries, they make a shew of knowledge, learning, and sagacity, beyond the generality of mankind, and by this means obtain great ascendancy and power over them.

BUT, after all the learned and elaborate nonsense that has been preached and written
for

for many hundred years to explain these riddles, they remain as inexplicable as ever. And this voluminous labour, which doth not appear a labour of love, might well have been spared: for no proposition can be truer or plainer, than, That whatever God requireth of men to believe, he has made clear and evident; and whatever he commands them to do, he hath given them ability to perform; so true is that excellent saying of one of the ancients, *Deus non ducit ad cælum per diffi-*
cilia.

THIRDLY, the last mentioned objection is, that this dissertation was written against religion, to make it appear unreasonable and ridiculous. This is a heavy charge indeed: however, as nothing could be farther from the author's intention than in any manner to injure TRUE RELIGION, which, on the contrary, he sincerely wishes to serve and promote, he hopes to clear himself entirely from even such a suspicion.

MAY not a person endeavour to set the abuses of law or physick in a ridiculous light, without being suspected of any design to ridicule those useful sciences? Nay, may he not take that method purely with a view of
doing

doing them service? Why then may not the like be done respecting the abuses of religion?

'Tis true, the author hath made free with some ceremonies, commonly called religious, especially those used by the church of *Rome*, and he acknowledges a thorough dislike to, and contempt for, many of these; not being able to discern in them the least appearance of that wisdom which descendeth from above, but much that is earthly, sensual, and devilish. Indeed the folly of men is very visible in all such contrivances. As a rational creature the author is ashamed of these fooleries, and also thinks them extremely pernicious. For when men have practised a number of little tricks of devotion, as the late Dr. *Foster* very properly calls them, they are mighty apt to fancy they have performed their duty, and by this means frequently neglect the essentials of religion.

AND, as a belief that the Deity commanded bloody sacrifices, could not fail of begetting in men an opinion, that he is cruel and delights in blood; so the believing and teaching that God has appointed things in themselves trifling and insignificant, as necessary parts of his worship, serves to create
mean

mean and contemptible ideas of the divine Being.

It is indeed 'usually said, this hath been done in condescension to the weakness of men, and therefore *God gave his people statutes which were not good; and judgments whereby they should not live*: that is, instituted a childish and unefficacious religion. But is not this charging God foolishly? or rather hypocritically? For no such statutes or judgments could be ordained by perfect wisdom and goodness. On the contrary, were not all the idle and worthless ceremonies, in which some religions so much abound, invented by fools according to their own folly? or by designing knaves, for their own interest, to cheat fools?

Two of the chief causes why people are so easily induced to depend upon such trifles, are, *first*, That being in terrible fear of damnation, they, like persons in danger of drowning, catch at straws. And, *secondly*, the performance of these things is so much easier, and costs them so much less than subduing their inordinate passions, and practising pure and undefiled religion.

MISREPRESENTATIONS of the Deity, tending to raise gross conceptions of him, have
also

have also greatly corrupted mens religion and worship ; and been a means of introducing and establishing so many insignificant and contemptible methods of devotion.

If people are taught, and do believe, that God interests himself in, or gives directions about, the little trifling affairs of men, which they themselves are very well able to conduct, such as building houses or tabernacles ; making candlesticks, snuffers, priests garments, fringes, &c. &c. nay, that he has even condescended to a much lower employment than any of these, which may be read in the 23d chapter of *Deuteronomy*, the 12th, 13th, and 14th verses, with a most admirable reason for the order there given : if, I say, men are taught, and do believe, that the Deity is, or ever was, thus employed, what mean conceptions must they entertain of him ? Is not this to set up idolatry ? the worship of a mason, a carpenter, a founder, and a taylor ? What, but a trifling, nonsensical, and ridiculous religion, can we expect should be in-

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stituted

† If the advice of a *Pagan* poet, even in forming a play, a mere fiction, be proper, as most certainly it is,

*Nec Deus interfit, nisi dignus vindicæ nodus
Inciderit :*

how absurd must it be for a believer in ONE GOD, to represent the GREAT CREATOR OF THE UNIVERSE as thus actually employed ?

stituted for the worship of a being, concerning whom men have entertained so low and contemptible an opinion? And thus we find it in fact. For the *Jewish* religion seems suited only to the worship of such an object: who, indeed, can reasonably suppose the contriver of it had the supreme God in all his thoughts?

WHETHER man, when first created, had any religion, or, if any, of what kind it was, we do not know. If he was originally but a little above the beasts of the field, as it is certain great part of our species were for many ages, and multitudes of them still are, even at this day, then contemplation was the least of his employment, and we may reasonably suppose he thought little or nothing concerning his Creator. But admitting that man at his first creation, as for the dignity of our nature we are very willing to believe, was formed with a clear, penetrating, and mature understanding and judgment, nothing then could be more natural or likely, than that he should endeavour to discover from whom, or what he derived his being.

HAVING an evident perception and certain proof of his own existence, and the existence of all other objects of his senses, and knowing

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that he had a beginning, and did not create himself, nor could create any thing else ; and finding he was superior, in mental abilities, to all other earthly creatures he had any knowledge of, and therefore reasonably concluding that none of them had power to create him or themselves, he was obliged to search farther.

THE splendid appearance of the sun, and its genial warmth, by which man perceived himself, and all animals and vegetables, vivified and preserved, might probably cause that most beneficial and glorious luminary, at first, to be by him esteemed the creator and preserver of all things. But if the faculties of man's mind, in the early time of his creation, were in the above-mentioned degree of perfection, he would probably then soon have considered, that the sun was, as he saw, a limited being, and but a part of the visible creation ; that a part could not produce the whole, nor a limited being the universe. As he might be thus convinced that the sun was not the creator of world, it was natural for him to carry his inquiry farther ; and he might, perhaps, think in the following manner.

SOME being did always exist, or nothing could have had any existence ; for it is ab-

solutely impossible that mere nothing should produce something. This being, which always existed, could not be created, but hath given being to all things which had a beginning. That being, who created all things, is certainly possessed of all possible power, and cannot be circumscribed or limited, and therefore is present every where. There can possibly be but ONE almighty FIRST CAUSE^s, who can want no perfection, and is therefore infinitely wise and good. And as all the objects of sight, or any other sense, are in their nature limited, so that being, who is infinite, cannot be the object of sense, and, consequently, is invisible.

THUS, it is conceived, man might, at his first formation, if his understanding and judgment were as we have supposed, attain the belief, or rather knowledge, of one eternal, self-existent, almighty, omnipresent, invisible power, of infinite goodness.

ADMITTING then that man was originally endowed with wisdom and knowledge, and entertained rational opinions of his Creator, we may well suppose his religion and worship were also rational. Consequently, he did not knock his head against a tree, fast 'till almost dead, or run thorns into his flesh, to please a
being

^s Two first causes are a contradiction in terms.

being of perfect goodness: neither did he get a sharp flint to cut the throat of a lamb or a kid for that purpose. As little likely was he, if he gathered some acorns, apples, or figs, for his food, to offer a part of them to the invincible Creator of the universe. Neither can we imagine, as we have not supposed man in any degree foolish or mad, that he would jump over a stick, fall to singing or dancing, pass through fire, plunge into water, or play any other foolish gambols to please the all-wise God.

BUT if the first man entertained just opinions of the Deity, and worshipped him after a reasonable manner, it is certain that almost his whole posterity soon lost, in a great degree at least, all true sentiments concerning God and his worship: so irrational indeed have been, and still are, the religion and devotion of multitudes, that it seems as if they thought men were to become fools before they could be truly religious, and grow distracted before they could be thoroughly devout.

WHEN we take a view of the good sense and sagacity which mankind shew on great variety of subjects and occasions, and the extreme folly and stupidity so notorious in the religion of most of them, who can forbear to

say :--- When they consider mens understandings they cannot but admire their religion, and when they consider their religion they cannot but admire their understandings.

NEVERTHELESS, those who endeavour to draw mens minds from "beggarly elements," --- "from vain things which cannot profit," are, by certain persons especially, often-times represented as enemies to mankind. Freedom of thought, which is the right of every man, and the great privilege and glory of human nature, is reproached and vilified as licentiousness and arrogance. If free-thinking be blameable, its opposite, which can be no other than slavish-thinking, we must suppose is commendable. Why do not these gentlemen then speak out and say so? To do them justice, many of them have been very explicit, and loud too, on the subject. *Roman Catholicks* tells us plainly, and with one voice, we must not, in religious matters, think or judge for our selves : and there are numbers, in all other churches, who teach the same irrational and abominable doctrine.

AND as mens thinking for themselves on these subjects is, it seems, by no means allowable ; so the declaring their thoughts, if they happen to be contrary to established opinions
and

and practices, however unreasonable and pernicious these may be, is esteemed a capital crime; and, in many countries, to their eternal infamy, is capitally punished.

THE opinion, that a religion established by law ought not to be called in question, has so far prevailed with many people, priests especially, that even some persons, remarkable for their love of liberty in general, have zealously espoused it. Of this truth, the late reverend doctor *Middleton* was an eminent instance: he, who had himself written and published very free inquires into several articles of faith established in his own country, yet too plainly insinuated that another author, in doing the like, had acted an immoral and a criminal part, for which he deserved punishment^t.

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BUT,

^t See a letter to doctor *Waterland*, &c. in doctor *Middleton's* works, Vol. II. p. 168 and 169. 4to. edit.

It is with great readiness and pleasure I do justice to this gentleman's character, in acknowledging that he very ingenuously retracted this warm and hasty sentence; and I chuse to do it in his own words:

" 'Tis then my firm principle and persuasion," says this excellent author, " that a free inquiry into all points of religion, is always useful and beneficial; and, for that reason, never to be punished or prohibited. It opens the minds and reforms the manners of the people; makes them reasonable, sociable, governable; easy to such as differ from them, and as little scandalized at the different opinion, as

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BUT, although this opinion hath obtained so much credit, and is by some esteemed a maxim, it is nevertheless very unjust, and cannot fail of being attended with extreme bad consequences.

No religion was ever more firmly established throughout, in a manner, all the regions of the earth, than *Paganism*. Had the truth of this religion never been called in question, it would never in any place have been abolished, and *Christianity*, in so many places, substituted in its room. *Popery* was, for many ages, the established religion in our country: if it had not been opposed, we should never

“ the different complexion of their neighbour : whereas the
 “ restraint of this liberty, and the imposition of systems and
 “ articles, that must not be called in question, nourishes a
 “ churlish spirit of bigotry, uncharitableness, enthusiasm,
 “ which no civil power can moderate ; a spirit that has so
 “ oft involved mankind in wars and bloodshed, and by turns
 “ endangered the ruin of every Christian country in the world.

“ If, therefore, in my argument against *Christianity as Old*,
 “ &c. I am understood to recommend or suggest, in any
 “ manner, the reasonableness of punishing the author ; I dis-
 “ claim and disavow it, as contrary to my intention and my
 “ principles : all such punishment is against the interest of
 “ society ; the interest of truth ; the interest of religion itself :
 “ which, as it could not have been propagated at first but
 “ by a liberty of thinking, writing, preaching ; so cannot be
 “ preserved in its purity, but by the very same means.”

Idem, p. 312 and 313.

Surely, this noble defence of religious liberty, in its full extent, makes ample amends for the above-mentioned mistake which the doctor had committed.

never have been delivered from such a cruel yoke of bondage as this nation long groaned under ; nor now have enjoyed the inestimable benefits of the *Protestant* religion. The same may be said of all false religions established in the world : were the truth of them not to be controverted, they could not possibly be disproved or rooted out, and true religion planted in their stead.

SEEING then, that such changes for the better, such happy events, have been the consequence of free-thinking, why should men be debarred, or in any manner discouraged, from enjoying so useful and valuable a privilege ?---a privilege, by which false religion hath been, and frequently will be, detected and discountenanced, and true religion proved and confirmed. Indeed it has partly proceeded from freedom of thought “ not having its “ perfect work,” that some *Christian* churches were built on the rotten foundations of *Pagan* and *Jewish* temples, and so many of their false ornaments made use of, and such quantities of the rubbish of the two latter mixed with the materials of the former : and this has rendered those churches such weak, tawdry, and useless structures.

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FOR priests to be so angry, as most of them are, at all opposition to the religion they profess, looks as if they were conscious of its not being true, or, at least, doubted their ability to defend it. Though of this last there are many who cannot be reasonably suspected, if we consider that they frequently undertake to defend and prove, what, one would think, no men in their senses could possibly believe.

UPON the whole : they were the insignificant and foolish inventions of men, which have been substituted instead of religion, and called by that most respectable and sacred name, that the author intended to shew were trifling, contemptible, and ridiculous.

As to true religion, which he thinks consists in worshipping God in spirit and in truth ; in temperance, justice, charity according to every sense of that word, and universal benevolence, he unfeignedly declares the utmost esteem and veneration for it. Without such a religion, he is of opinion no real happiness can be enjoyed by individuals or by society. The want of it has undoubtedly occasioned so much riot and wantonness, so much dissipation of thought and time, so much deceit and hypocrisy, so many persecutions,

cutions, wars, massacres, and other various moral evils in the world. It is therefore this most useful and beneficial religion, that the author recommends to others, and most sincerely and ardently wishes to practice himself.



OF

O F

H A P P I N E S S.

HAPPINESS is sought after by all men, but enjoyed by very few : this seems to proceed principally from the uneasy, discontented tempers of some persons, and from others mistaking wherein happiness truly consists.

COMPLETE happiness is not made for man ; whoever expects it, knows little of the world or himself. But this should not discourage us from endeavouring to gain such a portion of it, as is suited to our nature and circumstances ; for if we attain not the utmost of our desire, we shall nevertheless, like those who have searched after the universal elixir, make many useful discoveries and acquisitions by the attempt.

ILL-TEMPERED persons, especially those who are envious, malicious, tyrannical, and inhuman, are absolutely unfit for happiness ;

as

as they cannot bear to see others happy, they are incapable of being so themselves: the boisterous and jarring passions that disorder and untune their souls; the malevolence of their dispositions, which corrodes their hearts, suffer them to enjoy very little repose or content: even such mens pleasures are generally of so unnatural and preposterous a kind, that they can no more conduce to happiness, than unwholsome foods can conduce to health.

THE means proposed to themselves by most men for attaining happiness, are either the indulging in sensual pleasures, or the acquisition and enjoyment of grandeur, power, fame, or riches.

PLEASURES of the sense are, by some men, wholly excluded from any share in our happiness: nothing less than a total mortification of the natural appetites will serve these people: this they preach up and pretend to practice, but it is a most unnatural, unreasonable doctrine, and the propagators of it are whimsical enthusiasts, or designing hypocrites. Pleasures of the sense, if kept within due bounds, and discreetly managed, may undoubtedly contribute to our happiness; but if indiscriminately and inordinately gratified, they destroy even the capacity of enjoyment. Pleasures of this
kind

kind are like rivers, which, if confined to their proper channels, are both pleasant and useful, but when they overflow their banks, they lay waste and make havock of what is most valuable.

THOSE who, without proper caution, pursue sensual pleasures, should consider, that a denial of themselves, in some inclinations, is absolutely necessary to the gratification of others ; and that some pleasures they deprive themselves of, would perhaps conduce much more to happiness than those they indulge in. If a man lavishes so much on a worthless woman, who perhaps hates and despises him, that he is rendered unable to relieve a worthy indigent friend ; hath he not deprived himself of a greater pleasure by gratifying a lesser ? Besides, too eager and immoderate pursuits of sensual pleasures, often ruin mens estates, debilitate both body and mind, and consequently deprive men of happiness.

THE pleasures that happiness principally consists in are intellectual ; these are solid and permanent ; the more they are enjoyed, the more ardently they are desired, and the stronger the faculty of enjoyment grows. Sensual pleasures are like some sorts of food, which are pleasant to the palate, but if much indulged

indulged in, turn to crudities and obstructions: pleasures of the mind are like foods, which are not only agreeable to the taste, but though freely used, digest well, and afford strength and nourishment.

AN increase of knowledge in some useful art or science; a discovery made, a good work accomplished for the benefit of mankind; or private interest given up for the sake of the public: these leave lasting impressions of satisfaction on the mind, and conduce much to happiness.

IT is no small misfortune to set our hearts, and place our felicity, on those things which are out of our reach; for the inability of obtaining them, occasions great uneasiness: this, respecting grandeur, power, fame, and riches, must be the case of multitudes of people; and even among those who do possess these glittering enjoyments, how few are made happy by them? Surely, happiness depends much more upon the contracting our desires, than enlarging our possessions, and is greatly promoted by pursuing only such pleasures as reason approves of.

GRANDEUR, with all its train and equipage, is so far from contributing to happiness, that

that it is a manifest impediment ; an incumbrance which even kings and princes, who have sense enough, are forced to divest themselves of, in order sometimes to enjoy a happy hour.

POWER, if obtained or used for any other purpose than the good of the public, can no more confer happiness on the governors than the governed.

FAME acquired by the performance of good actions is very acceptable and pleasing to many generous and noble minds ; but when inordinately desired becomes a disease, and is very apt to render men contemptible.

EVEN so great a man as *Cicero* extremely debased his character by an intemperate thirst after fame. For a man's actions to be approved by the knowing and the virtuous is certainly very desirable ; but popular applause is oftentimes as uncertain in its duration, as injudicious in its choice. How common is it for a person to be one day almost the object of the people's worship, and the next of their hatred and contempt ? We have seen some men become famous by actions for which they ought to have been detested ; and others treated with the basest neglect, though they have

have performed the most valuable services. A neighbouring nation paid the highest honours to a late king, who merely to gratify a boundless and wicked ambition, enslaved and almost ruined his kingdom; on the contrary, many are the instances in history of the most ungrateful treatment bestowed on those who have endeavoured the preservation, or even effected the redemption of their country from slavery.

A STATE of indigence seems by no means adapted to happiness. Want sits heavy upon the mind, and depresses all its faculties. But riches can only conduce to happiness when prudently managed and enjoyed. If the mere possession of wealth conferred happiness, we should not see so many miserable wretches who abound in money, and yet want all things else: these people may possess, but cannot enjoy; neither have they power or inclination to dispense to others what they are not capable of using themselves: they are like the dog in the manger, who would neither eat straw himself, nor suffer the ox. Wealth to some others is one of the greatest misfortunes that could befall them: it serves only to precipitate them on the most destructive vices, or betray them into some of the worst of company; such as pillage, and

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often

often times ruin those at whose tables they are fed, and by whose purses they have been maintained. One of the greatest pleasures, besides enjoying the conveniencies of life, which men gain from the possession of riches, is to assist the deserving needy, and to make others happy: this produces a sort of happiness to the benefactor, which is perhaps the stronger and more intense by being reflected. To bestow in such a manner as to make a worthy man happy, is putting out money at the highest interest.

THE being able to approve our own designs and actions, and reflect with pleasure upon them when they are brought to the test of honour and reason, is absolutely necessary to happiness: for if all the world extol a man, and yet he knows himself a villain, though he may receive some transient pleasure from undeserved applause, yet this can no more render him happy, or cause him to think himself so, than the telling a sick person, who feels a cruel distemper preying upon his vitals, that he has a good complexion and looks well, can cure such an one, or make him believe he is in health.

THOSE actions which are just and right, or that procure happiness, are much more generally

rally known than practised ; one great cause of this seems to be want of resolution, without which a man is not fit to serve himself, his friend, or his country ; or, in other words, to procure happiness to himself or others : this resolution, or firmness of mind, enables a man to perform, or at least warmly and steadily pursue, what upon mature deliberation his judgment approves ; gives him power to resist and subdue his own inclinations and passions, when he sees they interfere with his true interest or happiness ; and to contemn the opinion of the multitude when it is against reason. This is, " *To dare to be wise*.

It was this sort of courage that enabled *Fabius Maximus*, the *Roman* dictator, to bear with patience the reproaches of the people, and his own officers, who accused him of cowardice for not fighting *Hannibal* ; to persist in the wise resolution he had taken, and thereby to save the commonwealth : and it was the want of this virtue, which precipitated *Pompey* on a battle with *Cæsar* against his own judgment, put him beside the prudent measures he had concerted, and thereby probably lost him the empire of the world.

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PERHAPS

" *Sapere aude*.

HOR.

PERHAPS it may be objected, that few men have so much resolution as is necessary to overcome their own unruly appetites, or the force of custom, and popular opinion; but this will only prove, that there are not many who have taken pains enough to attain it: for virtues as well as vices, good habits as well as bad, are certainly to be acquired. *Socrates* was an eminent instance of this; when he was told, that a famous physiognomist had, by the rules of his art, pronounced him to be addicted to several vices which his pupils knew he was free from, and therefore despised the physiognomist, “The man (said *Socrates*) has judged rightly, for by nature “I am addicted to those vices, but by philosophy have corrected nature.”

SOME men are of opinion, that we are prompted to action almost intirely by our passions; and generally determined by the strongest. If this should be admitted, yet surely reason may direct us to subdue those which interfere with our happiness, and encourage such as promote it: perhaps this management of the affections contributes very much to the difference between the prudent and imprudent, or the happy and unhappy man.

THOSE

THOSE, who are not able to stem directly the rapid streams of passion, which hurry them into many inconveniences and crimes, should endeavour to divert their minds on more innocent pursuits, or so to manage their inclinations that they may become subservient to virtue and happiness.---The fear of poverty, infamy, or diseases, often-times deters men from vices which they apprehend will ruin their fortunes, reputations, or health; and industry, or proper employment, may help to cure ill habits contracted and matured by idleness.

SUPPOSE a person finds in himself an ardent desire after praise, which, if not well regulated, might put him upon undervaluing others, and pretending to qualifications and virtues he does not possess; yet this desire of praise, being rightly directed by his reason, only prompts him to such actions as are praiseworthy, and to be what he would appear to be.

AGAIN, if we find ourselves extremely prone to anger and resentment, by which our own happiness, as well as that of others, greatly suffers; and, in consequence of this temper of mind, we are too apt to punish faults, or revenge affronts, let us try, if forgiving, with proper distinction, those who

have offended us, and thereby perhaps gaining profelytes to virtue, and converting enemies into friends, will not afford infinitely more pleasure than inflicting grievous punishments, or obtaining the most ample revenge.

IT is related of *Hasan* the son of *Ali*, who was *Mohammed*'s son-in-law, that a slave having spilled a dish of soup on him boiling-hot, as he sat at table, and fearing his master's resentment, fell immediately on his knees, and repeated these words out of the *Koran*, *Paradise is for those who bridle their anger.* *Hasan* answered, "I am not angry." The slave proceeded, *And for those who forgive men.* "I forgive you," said *Hasan*. The slave however finished the verse, adding, *For God loveth the beneficent.* "Since it is so, (replied *Hasan*) "I give you your liberty, and four hundred "pieces of silver ^w."

HAD *Hasan* punished this slave in anger, it would probably have been with great severity, and he might always afterwards have repented it; but this act of moderation and generosity, must have given him great pleasure whenever he reflected upon it. And if the slave had one spark of gratitude in his breast, this kindness of his master could not fail to raise it into a flame.

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^w SALE'S *Koran*, p. 51.

THE sum of the whole seems to be, that men by reasoning aright, and skilfully playing some passions against others, may discourage, and, by degrees, subdue such as interfere with their happiness, and promote and strengthen those which contribute to it. And also, that human and temporal felicity very much consists in a right management of our inclinations and pleasures; in dividing our time between useful employments, and innocent agreeable diversions; in enjoying a competency with health, contentment, and cheerfulness; in having reason to be satisfied with our intentions and actions; in pursuing those that are beneficial with resolution, and in doing good.

YET, after all, it must be confessed, that some men are by nature much better formed for happiness than others. There are many, and those generally of a thoughtful melancholy temper, who, as if the evils of life did not of themselves come fast enough, are very apt to anticipate them in their imaginations; and, as *Shakespear* says of cowards, *They die many times before their deaths*; they fancy many calamities will happen, only because it is possible they may happen. Thus we frequently see men, in the midst of riches and plenty, in dread of poverty and want. But

there are another sort of men, the reverse of these, who possess a certain joyousness of spirit, a gladness of heart, that as the philosopher's stone is said to turn all it touches into gold, so this temper of mind converts many incidents to pleasure, and causes them to promote happiness, which, to those of another disposition, would be wholly indifferent, or rather occasion discontent or unhappiness.



O F

H O N E S T Y.

HONESTY is the best POLICY.

THE true value of honesty can scarcely be set in a stronger light than by taking a view of the consequences that would attend a general practice of fair dealing or of knavery. If the latter universally prevailed, then strife, hatred, precarious tenure of property, endless law-suits, with bribery, corruption, unjust judgments, and a long train of vices and miseries, would become epidemical. But if honesty was the general practice, peace, beneficence, security of property, a general harmony of action among mankind (infinitely preferable to uniformity of religious opinions) would then prevail.

SUCH is the apparent worth of integrity,
that all men, even the most deceitful and
unjust,

unjust, are ready to acknowledge the benefits attending it ; and we hear the dishonest complain as loudly as any, when they suffer by the knavery of others. What pity it is that a conduct of such general utility, and so universally applauded, should not be as universally practised ? Too many are so short-sighted, or so apt to be blinded by some present gain, which they fancy will accrue to them from knavish actions, that they cannot see consequences, and that it is their true interest to act with integrity.

THERE are a sort of men who appear very warm on the side of honesty, and are continually making encomiums on this virtue, but the practice of it they leave entirely to others. What a mean figure must such men make even in their own view, and what a despicable one in the eye of the world, whose declared sentiments bear witness against the whole tenor of their actions ? What semblances have men put on ? What disguises have they worn ? that they might appear what they are not. Religion and irreligion have been made use of to deceive. Surely it is worth enquiry, whether that ape of virtue, hypocrisy, does not put men to more trouble that they may seem virtuous, than it would cost them to be so.

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MERE pretenders to honesty are without doubt justly liable to be detested; but what then do they deserve, who see so much beauty in tricking and cheating, as to practise them, not only for the advantages which they fancy will ensue, but for the reputation of being esteemed very cunning fellows? Such creatures had much rather compass their designs, by indirect practices and low cunning, than by the plain methods of honesty and upright dealing: in this they glory, but surely they glory in their shame. That there are persons of this character, no one, acquainted with the world, can doubt: and that they are some of the most contemptible, and incorrigible of men, is very certain: as there are therefore no hopes of reclaiming such who are infected with so preposterous an ambition, we shall proceed to consider the case of him

** Who fears not to do ill, yet fears the name,
And, free from conscience, is a slave to fame.*

WE should by no means refuse the aid of any motive which will contribute to the advancement of honesty, and it cannot be denied but a desire of reputation may have considerable effects to that purpose; but if men act honestly only for fear of shame, or merely for the sake of reputation, they will be very liable

** Denham's Cooper's-Hill.*

liable to act otherwise, when they think themselves safe from discovery.

WHOEVER is honest merely for reputation or interest, shews that his head is better than his heart, and will undoubtedly become a knave when he is sure to find his account in being so. Such a man's integrity is not fixed on a firm foundation: the sun-shine of prosperity or power, the storms of poverty or adversity, may destroy it: those only are thoroughly honest, and absolutely to be depended on in all times, and in all circumstances, who form a steady resolution to contribute all in their power towards the good order and harmony which they see would naturally result from every man doing to another as he would be done unto; or such who practice this virtue of honesty from an innate rectitude of mind; from a benevolent temper prone to do good, and from an honest heart, which scorns and detests all base and mean actions.

A DUE respect paid to the opinions that good men may entertain of us, will, without doubt, be serviceable to promote the practice of morality; and certainly restrains men in some degree from committing bad actions; but a truly virtuous man will pay such a regard

regard to himself, that he will abhor the doing an ill thing, though ever so secretly, as much as he would be ashamed of the scandal of it, if known ever so publickly. This due regard to ourselves, this aversion to all mean, base actions, from the turpitude and deformity we see in them, and from the ill effect we know they must have on our minds, thoroughly discourages vice and promotes virtue: this is laying the ax to the root of the evil tree, whilst the deference we pay to the opinions others may entertain of us, only prunes off some branches.

It is an excellent precept I have somewhere met with, *Nil turpe committas, neque coram aliis, neque tecum; maxime omnium reverere teipsum*. Men are apt enough to reverence themselves for qualities, or supposed excellencies, not truly praise-worthy; or to over-rate those that may be so in some degree: this often produces pride and contempt of others; but the respect here meant, is that which arises from a consideration of the dignity of human nature, and the purpose for which men are endowed with such excellent faculties; this reverence of ourselves naturally excites a generous scorn and contempt of acting any thing mean or base.

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As fraud and deceit are the sources of innumerable vices and evils, so honesty is profitable unto all things ; and is indeed the root from which many virtues and benefits spring : from hence proceed mutual trust, confidence, and punctuality ; so necessary, so beneficial in general, and particularly to the merchant and tradesman. Who will not chuse to buy of one he thinks scorns to deceive him ? and sell to one he knows will pay him exactly according to contract ?

NEBULO and *Probus* served an apprenticeship to one merchant, and began the world near the same time : *Nebulo* set up with a very considerable fortune, and was rather covetous than expensive. From the beginning of his business he shewed an unwillingness to pay money, though it was ever so justly due ; and notwithstanding for some years he was well able, yet never paid according to his contracts : this neglect or dislike of punctuality became so habitual, and influenced him to such a degree, that he never kept an appointment on a party of pleasure, any more than for affairs of the greatest importance : he took all advantage of the ignorance of those he bought any commodity of, and endeavoured to over-reach every one he sold to : by using these, and other tricking methods, *Ne-*
bulo

bulo involved himself in many expensive law-suits, and was generally obliged to pay ten *per cent.* more than a good pay-master might have bought for : in time no one chose to deal or converse with him ; so that he is now sunk into poverty and contempt.

PROBUS began with a small fortune, and therefore applied himself to gain commissions, which he transacted with such faithfulness, as soon greatly increased his business. *Probus* was always punctual, from appointments for diversion, to the dispatch of the most considerable affairs ; for he never esteemed disappointments, of any kind, small matters, nor good or ill habits of little consequence. The labouring men and mechanicks employed by *Probus*, are always ready to serve him with chearfulness, and the utmost of their abilities and skill, well knowing they shall be paid, and that not grudgingly, as soon as they have finished their work : tradesmen court his custom, and sell him at the very lowest prices they can afford : as they are assured of his punctuality, so they are sensible he will not knowingly be twice imposed on by any one ; for as he is strictly honest to all with whom he has to do, he thinks he has a right to expect others should be so to him ; and is persuaded that detecting and discouraging unfair

fair practices, is not only necessary for his own interest, but a debt due to virtue and the public.

As *Probus* is by his honesty and good management grown wealthy, he is now in a capacity of trading largely on his own account, but is careful to do it considerably within his stock; and as it is known that he is seldom without large sums of money, this brings a great resort of the needy to offer him commodities which their necessities oblige them to sell cheap; but of this he makes no dishonest advantages. In short, *Probus* is revered by all the poor he employs; esteemed by those he deals with; and beloved by his acquaintance and friends.

HONESTY, as well as good sense, teaches men not to accustom themselves to speak what they know is not true even on trivial affairs: many are apt to delight so much in the marvellous, as to forget the probable; this always undervalues them; and if good manners prevents their being contradicted, or exposed by others, yet a little reflection might convince these men, what a contemptible figure that person makes, who is an inventor, or knowingly a propagator of falsehoods. He who tells improbable stories, shews he has a
weak

weak judgment, or makes a very ill compliment to his auditors.

AN honest man will injure no person in his reputation ; knowing and feeling the pleasure and advantages of a good name. Men in general are very much provoked at being scandalized ; and, perhaps, the finest minds are, many times, the most sensible of reproach ; yet how wantonly do many murder the reputations of others ?

Few persons in bestowing characters regard truth as they ought : affectation, aversion, party, and many times invention, bear too great a share. Men seldom give characters but in extremes ; and yet perhaps there are not many cases wherein the superlative degree should be less used. We find many more inclined to speak the worst things than the best ; but of all men none are so prone to this as bigots of any sort ; they approve none, nay they generally hate all in whom they cannot see their own likeness : the principal inquiry these people make concerning any one, is not of his actions, or manner of life, but what he believes, or what he does not believe. The bigoted atheist pities, or rather despises, any one who is weak enough to believe in his maker : the bigot-

ed enthusiast hates every person who does not give credit to all the absurd, or cunningly devised fables, invented by wicked and designing men, the more easily to tyrannize over fools.

To sum up the whole, honesty is of such value, that without it there can be no compleat or truly amiable character. If a man is possessed of riches, power, learning, or even sense, wit, or any other shining qualities, if he is without sincerity, he is at best but like a picture, in which there are agreeable lights and shades, or fine colouring; but not that justness or proportion, that true likeness of nature, which gives a real value, and makes the piece pleasing to the best judges. Indeed riches, power, or any of the aforementioned advantages, if possessed by a dishonest man, only enlarge his capacity of doing mischief, and render him a more eminent villain.



O F

AFFABILITY

A N D

COMPLAISANCE.

MANNERS *make the* MAN.

AS integrity is the only solid foundation for mutual trust and confidence among mankind, and consequently is essentially necessary to their happiness; so affability and complaisance, by rendering men agreeable to each other, contribute not a little to the ornament and pleasure of society.

By complaisance, is not here intended the use of unmeaning compliments or troublesome ceremonies, justly reckoned among the incumbrances of conversation; nor low compliances, or fulsome flatteries, which are al-

ways despised by the good and generous. The complaisance or affability of real use, is that part of politeness which consists in proper respect paid to the persons, and due deference shewn to the opinions of others. If any doubt the necessity of this conduct, for men to become agreeable and serviceable to one another, they need but try how they relish disrespect shewn to themselves, or contempt of their own opinions: and how unacceptable advice, or even any other good office is, when accompanied with discourteous treatment.

THE true method of gaining respect is, rather by doing actions worthy of it, than seeming much to desire it: there is great proneness in men to disappoint those who appear overfond of esteem; and surely this is but reasonable, if they do nothing to deserve it. No behaviour can be more opposite to complaisance, than that strutting mein and air of defiance so much affected by some men, whose *bravery* commonly lies wholly on the *outside*, and is chiefly exercised on those who are too much their inferiors or dependents, to resent injuries as they deserve: but such men should consider, there is a levelling nature in quarrelling and abuse, by which superiors are very apt to lose, and often justly forfeit that respect which would otherwise be their due.

It is certainly but just, as well as decent, that every man should behave to his equals, as he expects they should behave to him; and humanity requires, that we remember those in stations beneath us are our fellow-creatures, and the difference betwixt us not natural but accidental. A low station in life is often accompanied with desert, and superiority too seldom the reward of excellency.

PEOPLE who confine their conversation to one set of men, and see little of the world, commonly entertain great partiality for their own opinions, customs, and fashions; this makes them very uncomplaisant, and apt to condemn every thing they are not accustomed to: on the contrary, those who have conversed in a more general manner, and particularly such as have travelled into foreign countries, frequently become complaisant; which may proceed partly from things growing familiar that were before uncommon and strange; but more especially from a desire natural in most men, to beget in strangers a good opinion both of themselves and their country. This, under proper regulations, is undoubtedly laudable, and I heartily wish was the care of every traveller, and my countrymen in particular.

SOME men bestow civilities as misers lend their money, in expectation of repayment with unreasonable interest: others are uncomplaisant by design; they fancy a rough behaviour will be taken for honesty, and positiveness for good sense. But the first is often used as a cloak to knavery, and the latter as well as gravity for a colour to ignorance. It is true, appearances pass with many people for reality; otherwise we should not see such effects attend the appearing thoroughly self-sufficient, nor so much respect paid to some men for no other reason, but their paying a great deal to themselves.

THAT species of pride which consists in mens overvaluing themselves, and thinking diminutively of others, is a great enemy to complaisance: those who have the largest share of knowledge, are always the most sensible of their own defects, and the shortness of human understanding; they find many reasons for humility, none for pride.

A COMPLAISANT behaviour is generally acquired by keeping good company; but is most easily gained, and constantly practised, by those who are good-natured, and of a benevolent disposition: such have the root in themselves, and find little more to do than prune the branches as they shoot out.

By carrying complaisance too far, it degenerates into flattery : they who practise this for interest, are dangerous persons, and ought carefully to be avoided : such who, through an unmanly levity, make a sacrifice of their understandings to almost every one that opposes them, soon lose all sentiments of their own, and have generally but small offerings to make. Whoever is well-acquainted with *Ned Supple*, and those he converses with, may easily know what company he last kept by the opinion he is then of, and which they may be assured he will part with the first time it is opposed. *Ned* is like the *Camelion*, that has no colours properly its own, but borrows from the nearest objects.

MEN who are naturally of rough and morose tempers, by habituating themselves to the practice of complaisance, gain a sort of artificial good temper ; but by peevishness and ill-manners they grow from one degree of ill-humour and behaviour to another, 'till they become a jest to others, and a torment to themselves.

WE frequently meet with instances of the most boisterous tempers being calmed, when men think their interest or reputation at stake ; surely the interest and reputation of every man

is concerned in behaving with decency and affability.

IT has been recommended to such who are unpolite in behaviour, that they sacrifice to the graces : may it not as well be said,---
Converse with ladies ? Certainly nothing will sooner or more effectually wear off all unmannerly and clownish behaviour.

TOM LOVEMORE, from being clamorous, positive, and contentious, became at once mild, condescending, and obliging : he would formerly admit no debate on what he asserted, and was to the highest degree impatient of contradiction ; but now only proposes his opinion ; would by no means be too positive ; is willing to be convinced by better reasons. This strange alteration amazed all his acquaintance, 'till they heard he made his addresses to the accomplished and beautiful *Belinda*.

MANY excellent qualities lose their beauty and good effects for want of complaisance. Wit without it, is like some ingredients in medicine, which, though of noble use when corrected by proper lenitives, are attended with pernicious consequences if used without them. Some men bestow favours with so

little

little complaisance, that they almost lose their name, and a denial from others is little less grateful. Good sense itself is attended with much less force and efficacy on others, as well as pleasure to the possessors, without a mixture of this behaviour.

PERSONS who converse with much intimacy are very apt to neglect complaisance, not considering it is the cement of society; by this means they often fall into rude and indecent familiarities: those who are exactly well bred, frequently behave with much freedom to their companions; and indeed without this unrestrained and open conversation, a considerable pleasure in life would be lost; but care must be taken, that such conduct is practised only to those who are capable of making a right use and proper return of it: when half-bred people affect to imitate those who are really genteel, and awkwardly endeavour at these freedoms, they grow very troublesome, and never fail of being ridiculous.

IF men would be well heard in company, they should give attention to others; if treated with respect, they should treat others so. Direct contradictions, loud and positive assertions, with all personal reflections, are as unbecoming

unbecoming a gentleman, as they are unlikely to convince the understanding or mend the heart. Men may be persuaded, but not threatened or bullied out of their opinions: all attempts to that purpose, is playing the little tyrant. Many people, by a genteel, good-natured hint or reproof, may be reclaimed from an error; but by unmannerly, or severe reproaches, most are rendered obstinate, all have reason to be displeased. A kind reproof will make a good man your friend, an unmannerly reflection will make most men enemies.

WE may put the cheat on ourselves, or endeavour to deceive mankind; but it is certain, that all severity on opinions, or personal failings, which do not prejudice other persons, or injure the community, proceeds from pride, hypocrisy, ill-nature, or all of them, and not from a sincere desire of reclaiming particulars, or doing service to the publick. How frequently have we seen men very severe against those actions in others, which, when varied a little in form, and sometimes even without that alteration, they have been privately guilty of themselves? Oh this abominable practice of going to taverns! It was not so when I was a young man, says old *Testy*; but notwithstanding this exclamation, drinks drams

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by himself, till he forgets the sobriety of former times as well as the licentiousness of the present. The impudent creature! cries Mrs. *Faddle*, when her cousin was suspected of some imprudent freedoms, such should not be suffered to live: but three weeks after, she herself was found practising with her coachman. What damnable doctrines do these fanaticks teach! says Mr. *Orthodox*, and at the same time warmly asserts, that all who have the impudence to think for themselves, and dissent from opinions by law established, ought to be punished here, and will certainly be damn'd hereafter. Lady *Frigid* was, indeed, never suspected of incontinence, therefore tires all her acquaintance with railing against it; but it is plain this pretended virtue is owing merely to want of inclination; for she indulges all her passions without the least restraint; pride and envy appear glaringly in her conduct abroad; anger and tyranny in her behaviour at home, where she is indeed an *iron-scepter'd queen*.

THE benign and kindly influences of affability and complaisance, when they generally prevail among any people, are extended further than the affairs of private persons or small societies, nations are considerably affected

ed and benefited by them ; the rugged and cruel face of war, ever sufficiently terrible and forbidding, is somewhat smoothed and softened, when it happens between civilized nations.

IT is well known, that the present practice of the *Indians* in *America*, is always to destroy, or make slaves of those they conquer ; and history furnishes large accounts of the horrid cruelties used among unpolished and savage nations. If we compare the behaviour of the allies and *French* during the late long war, in which cruelty was as much as possible avoided, with the usage of uncivilized nations, we shall then see, in a strong light, the different conduct of barbarous and polite, complaisant and uncomplaisant people.



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*Invidus alterius macrescit rebus opimis :**Invidia Siculi non invenere tyranni**Majus tormentum. ———*

HOR.

OF all the various tempers and dispositions of mind we observe in men, very few indicate a worse heart, or produce more evil, than envy : an envious person repines at any excellence he observes in others, and sickens at the sight of good that happens to them. Poets and painters have exhibited frightful representations of this direful hag, and indeed they could not raise in mankind too detestable ideas of her.

*^z In a dark grott the baleful haggard lay,
Breathing black vengeance, and infecting day.*

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^z *Garth's Dispensary, Canto 2d. Description of Envy.*

*The chearful blood her meager cheeks forsook,
And basilisks sat brooding in her look.*

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*Glouting with sullen spight the fury shook
Her clotted locks, and blasted with each look.*

SIR Francis Bacon advises by no means to come near or converse with envious persons; he apprehended that some malignant *effluvia* proceed from their eyes, which may fascinate, and be greatly hurtful: if this observation be too fine-spun, or the opinion not well grounded; if envious persons are capable of doing no prejudice with their eyes, (which no doubt they wish they were) we know they are with their tongues, and other instruments of mischief.

MOST of the vices with which mankind are infected, proceed from excess: virtue being the mean; vice the extreme. Thus frugality and generosity are virtues; niggardliness and profusion (the extremes) are vices; but envy in the very seed is evil, and of so malignant and baneful a quality, that hardly any thing good can flourish near it.

ENVOUS persons endeavour to impose on others, and sometimes for want of examining their own hearts, are apt to deceive themselves,

selves, by representing their envious dispositions to be only emulation; but there is a wide difference. Emulation is a desire to equal, or excel others in what is praise-worthy: a person who emulates another, acknowledges and approves his good qualities, or excellencies, and desires to obtain the same, or, if possible, to go beyond them. The envious man is always sorry when he is forced to allow merit in any, grudges them the good they possess; and is generally far from endeavouring to practise what is laudable, though very desirous of obtaining what is profitable.

It is justly observed of vice in general, that it produces its own punishment; but surely that observation is more eminently verified in this vice of envy than in most others. What a miserable wretch must that man be, to whom all the good which happens to others within his knowledge, is to him evil! How much vexation of spirit is such a one plagued with; and how much pleasure does he lose, that is enjoyed by persons of a benevolent disposition? The misery of the damned in hell is said to consist partly in repining at the happiness of others which they cannot participate: is not an envious temper a sort of hell upon earth?

ENVY is a compound of pride, ill-nature, and covetousness. Some men think so well of themselves, and believe they possess so many good qualities, that riches and honours are their due; and if fortune, or perhaps rather their own ill-management, has withheld those things from them, they think her blind, and malign such on whom she has bestowed them.

SOME among all orders and degrees of men are infected with envy: it has even crept into cottages; but its most natural and ordinary residence is in the courts of princes: these are too often frequented by persons of little or no desert, but of unbounded desires, who are exceedingly struck with the glare and splendor of riches, equipage, and power: those who possess less of these than some other men, are very apt to envy all above them, and seldom stick at any methods of supplanting their superiors, in order to obtain what they fancy to be the *ultimatum* of human happiness.

PATRIOTISM, and the good of the publick, are the common pretences for mens desiring to obtain power: but the dishonest and scandalous methods too frequently made use of to gain places and preferments; as well as the covetous, rapacious, and oftentimes cruel
behaviour

behaviour of many men in power, sufficiently demonstrate, that their views and motives were mean, selfish, and base.

DETRACTION and defamation are two branches which proceed from this evil root of envy, and it is well known what poisonous fruit they bear. Did not men and women envy others their good names, their wit, learning, beauty, places, power, or possessions, we should not hear so many exceptions to good characters, nor so many false reports raised to destroy them.

It is not without great concern that one observes how common detraction and defamation are among the fair sex. As beauty is what they are taught from their infancy to set a high value upon, and as they grow up are almost adored for it; nothing is so much the object of envy among them: if any one possesses this advantage in so high a degree as to be universally acknowledged a beauty, she cannot, if you believe many of her own sex, have any other good quality. Were we to form a judgment of women from the characters they give one another, rather than from our own observations, we should certainly not entertain near so good an opinion of them as they deserve; and yet, considering

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the envious dispositions of so many, may it not be justly said, What pity it is, since nature has given them such angelick faces, that many of them should have contracted tempers of so different a kind?

THERE is scarcely a more certain sign of a bad heart, than to take pleasure in hearing, or reporting ill of others. Surely those who speak ill of almost every one, have very little merit of their own; therefore, one of the best remedies against an envious disposition, is for men to deserve well themselves.

MANY persons practise detraction and defamation, not only when they endeavour to set up themselves above others, but also when they would extol their favourites, whether eminent authors, or other great men: the prefaces of editors, commentators, and translators, printed before the books they publish, are often-times not only panegyricks on the authors of them, but a sort of libels against others who have wrote on the same subjects, or in the same manner. Why may not *Virgil* enjoy all the praise he so justly merits without detracting from *Homer*? Or what reason is there to speak meanly of *Julius Cæsar*, as a captain, when we give the duke of *Marlborough* the [character of a consummate general?

CERTAINLY

CERTAINLY it is making but a very ill compliment to the person's character intended to be celebrated, that before his reputation can be fully established, another's must be pulled down. It seems as if some men thought the bestowing praise, would be too good-natured an action, unless counter-ballanced by defamation.

DIFFERENCE of opinions in religion, or in party-matters, is very apt to beget detraction and defamation: disputes on those subjects have indeed carried these evils to the greatest height; for when men have once imagined (as they are very apt to do) that such who differ from them on these points, are enemies to God or their country, they then conclude no character or usage too bad for them; and that their own zeal for the honour of God, and the good of the publick, will sanctify all manner of outrage against the enemies to both. But if these zealous men would thoroughly examine themselves, they would soon find, that instead of zeal for God and their country, the true motives to these bad practices, are envy, malice, ill-nature, or some bye-ends of their own.

UPON the whole, what can be more mean and unmanly than detraction and defamation?

What more vexatious and corroding than envy? And what are those things which are generally the objects of our envy? Places, equipage, riches, grandeur, and power. And what are these, as they are too commonly used, but glittering evils?

How great a pleasure does that person enjoy, who wishes well to mankind? He has a share in the good fortune and happiness of every worthy man within his knowledge. A lady of this turn of mind thinks herself not less happy, because others are more beautiful, or richer, or greater, than herself: she wishes no persons of desert less so than they are: she knows true merit consists in improving the beauties of the mind, and that *to be rich in good works* is laying up a lasting treasure: in beauty, riches, and greatness of this kind, she emulates those in the first rank. Men of this benignity of temper, though they may be willing, or even desirous, to serve their country in eminent stations, if they think themselves fitly qualified, yet if others are preferred before them, they will not envy, nor endeavour, by unjust methods, to supplant them: no wilful misrepresentations of actions or persons, will proceed from men of this turn of mind: for what can induce those to act so vile a part who envy none, but wish

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well to all who deserve well: such are never better pleased than when they hear of a good and generous action performed by any man, and are always ready to give it due commendation. Such a mind is a continual feast; and such a man, where he is well known, can have no enemies, but those who are not capable of being friends.



O F

L U X U R Y

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E X T R A V A G A N C E,

T E M P E R A N C E

A N D

F R U G A L I T Y.

— *Res est severa voluptas.*

LUXURY is certainly one of the most deceitful and stupifying vices men can indulge in : whilst those who practise it imagine they are in full possession of pleasure and happiness, they are generally heaping upon themselves pain, misery, and poverty.

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NOTWITHSTANDING the ill consequences of this vice, yet we see how general and prevailing it is in our time and nation: all degrees and orders of men, that can possibly attain to it, are more or less infected by it: from the nobleman and gentleman, to the merchant, shopkeeper, and mechanick, some among them all practise it as far as they have the means.

IT is past all dispute true, that much the greater number of merchants and tradesmen, who have of late years become insolvent and bankrupt, were brought into these evil circumstances by their own or others luxury and extravagance. The great losses formerly sustained by our merchants during the long war with *France*, when not only very rich single ships were frequently taken by the enemy, but sometimes almost whole fleets underwent the same fate; and by that means many men, without any fault of their own, were impoverished: these losses have for a considerable time ceased, and men of late have been much left to ruin themselves, which they have as effectually done by luxury and extravagance, those enemies of their own houses, as any foreign enemy could have done for them.

A MERCHANT or tradesman of a large and extensive credit, by becoming insolvent, many

times involves numbers of innocent, honest, and industrious persons in his ruin. It cannot well be expected, that men who sacrifice the good of their families, and indeed their own real good and happiness, to some present pleasure and unreasonable desire, should have much humanity or consideration for others; but if they have any remains of these, if vice has not quite benumbed their internal senses, what compunction must they feel when they reflect, that by their mismanagement, or indulging in dainties or equipage beyond what their circumstances would afford, many honest persons are reduced to poverty, and deprived of the necessaries of life?

BUT they are not merchants or tradesmen only, who bring these evils on their fellow-creatures: those who should be as much distinguished by their virtues, as by their estates, titles, and preferments; and who ought to think that great estates, without justice and charity, are very ill deserved; that titles, without real honour, are but mere mockery; and that preferments, without desert, are an injury to the publick. Those, who should be as much distinguished by their virtues, as they are by their estates, titles, and preferments, and who ought thus to think, come in for a large share of the cause of these calamities.

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What is more common than for a man possessing a great estate, or bearing a title of honour, to let numbers of tradesmen, or others, suffer exceedingly for want of what he is justly indebted to them?

THIS practice, though very scandalous in itself, and injurious to many persons, is not the worst effect of noblemen and gentlemen's indulging in luxury, and living beyond their incomes. When men become necessitous, are not all the ties of honesty, honour, and conscience, frequently broke through for the sake of places and pensions to support their pomp and extravagancies? Nothing being deemed, by many men, so insupportable, as the want of means to live in luxury; nothing so mortifying, as others out-doing them in a voluptuous and splendid way of living. I will not say, it is as difficult for a man, who indulges in luxury, and whose expences exceed his income, to be honest, as *for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle*; but sure I am, such a character is very uncommon, and rarely met with.

IF an ambitious tyrannical prince, or a wicked minister, should ever entertain a design to reduce this nation to the despicable state of slavery which many of our neighbours
are

are in, no method could be more effectual to begin with, than to encourage a general practice of luxury: this vice, as has been already shewn, by precipitating men on expences which ruin their estates, causes those, who should be the guardians and chief supports of the publick liberty, to become dependent on a court; and by enervating the bodies and minds of the people in general, and destroying both publick and private virtue, makes them an easy prey to those who would enslave them. For when men are thoroughly corrupted by this vice, they do not only lose the ability of preserving their liberty, but many times the very inclination also.

HAVING now seen some of the many evils arising from the practice of luxury: that it often-times brings men to want and misery, and too frequently makes them villains: that it debilitates both body and mind; renders men unfit for any good or generous enterprise, and ripens them for slavery and destruction; it will not be improper to take a view of the effects of temperance and frugality.

MERCHANTS and tradesmen, by practising these virtues, are enabled to be punctual in their payments, increase their estates, extend their trades,

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trades, and live handsomely: by this means they may also enjoy chearfulness themselves, diffuse it to others, and become very useful members of the commonwealth. Noblemen and gentlemen of large estates, if they have children, are in a capacity to provide fortunes for them suitable to their births and education; to be charitable, independent, and, in a word, greatly to promote the happiness both of their families and their country.

As luxury then is destructive of virtue, and occasions many other evils and vices, so it is evident that temperance greatly helps to subdue vice, and produces many other virtues and benefits.

WHAT need have temperate, frugal men, who live within their incomes, to fawn or flatter; to become dependent, and offer fulsome adulations to the great? What temptation have they to falsify their promises, or betray their friends, or their country? If men can govern themselves, and their own appetites, they will never be false, nor slaves, to any man^a. And if we of this nation would practise

^a *Quisnam igitur liber? Sapiens: sibi qui imperiosus:*

Quem neque pauperies, neque mors, nec vincula terrent;

Responsare cupidinibus; contemnere honores

Fortis; & in seipso totus. —————

HOR.

practise temperance and frugality, there would be little danger of being ruined by ourselves, or conquered by our enemies. Such are the bulwarks and safe-guards of virtue.

So long as antient *Rome* practised these virtues, she preserved her liberty, and produced some of the best and most famous men that ever were; and, from an inconsiderable beginning, grew to be mistress of the world: but luxury soon involved her in slavery, and she then abounded with men guilty of all vices; such as *Tiberius*, *Nero*, *Caligula*, and many other monsters of human nature.

WHEN *Pyrrhus*, king of *Epirus*, waged war against antient *Rome*, which was long before she arrived at that height of power she afterwards attained, what a figure did that city make by means of many brave and great men who lived about that time! Men not more remarkable for their warlike exploits, than for temperance, frugality, modesty, and justice: such, among many others, were *Camillus*, *Curius*, the *Fabii*, and *Decii*, which last voluntarily offered themselves up (as they believed) for their country's safety. I mention these actions of the *Decii*, as very brave, considering the intention of them; but must, at the same time, express my concern at the
blind

blind and fatal superstition of that people, who set up such beings for their deities, or rather had such set up for them, as they imagined could require brave men to destroy themselves, or be destroyed by others, to appease the wrath of their gods: but such were the opinions the priests of that age inculcated, and such were the gods they made for the people.

BUT to return to the great men which Rome produced about the time *Pyrrhus* made war with her. *Pyrrhus* himself, when he had in vain attempted to bribe *Fabricius* with an offer of half his kingdom, though an enemy, gave him this glorious character: "This is that *Fabricius* (said he) whom it is harder to turn from the ways of virtue and honesty, than the sun from its course." When the ambassadors of the *Samnites* would have presented *Fabricius* with money and rich household goods, he pointing to his eyes, mouth, and belly, said, "As long as I can rule these," (that is, as long as I remain temperate) "I shall want nothing: carry you the money to them who stand in need of it." So moderate was this great man, that he lived on a small farm of his own, which he himself tilled, and had in his house but two pieces of plate.

SUCH

SUCH were the manners of those times, those happy times of temperance, that even the *Roman* ladies refused rich presents sent to them by *Pyrrhus*. But we may reasonably conclude, they had no jewels owing for, no mercers bills unpaid; that they had not lost more money at ombre or quadrille than they could pay, or were willing their husbands should know of.

IF our *British* ladies should be told, that there were no cards in antient *Rome*, they would certainly admire how the *Roman* ladies did to pass their time; but if they were also assured, that even those of the first quality spent almost their whole time in nursing and educating their children, in spinning for their own and family's cloaths, and in other household affairs, they would still wonder more: and yet, if they would sometimes condescend to divert themselves with reading their bibles, they would find the greatest of the *Hebrew* ladies were also thus employed.

How unfashionable and unpolite would a modern fine lady think any of her acquaintance, of whom it should be said, *She seeketh wool and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands. She stretched out her hand to the poor, yea she reacheth forth her hand to the needy. She*
maketh

maketh herself coverings of tapestry. She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness. But although a lady, so usefully employed, would in our age be justly thought very unfashionable; yet such strange and unpolite opinions had they formerly, that then it was said of such a one, Her children arise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her. The value of such a one was then esteemed far above rubies; and it was thought no ill compliment in those days, to say of a lady, She openeth her mouth with wisdom, and in her tongue is the law of kindness. But, in our age, such a compliment to the generality of ladies, would be as untrue, as unfashionable.



Of PRETENCES to
DISINTERESTEDNESS,
AND A
PUBLICK SPIRIT.

THERE are such advantages attending the reputation of men's being sincere, disinterested, and publick-spirited, that many persons are very desirous of this character, whose designs and actions centre entirely in their own particular interests, to which they sacrifice all other considerations, publick and private: these pretenders are frequently so successful in the arts of deceiving, that they insinuate themselves into the management of affairs relating both to particular persons and communities, who by this means often-times pay considerable gratuities to those by whom they are ruined.

DIVINES,

DIVINES, lawyers, physicians, and politicians do, in an eminent degree, pretend to the service of mankind.

THE first of these are an order of men set apart for the service of the publick, with ample provision in temporals, (however unequally distributed) that they may administer spirituals to the people: the assiduity of many of these in their calling; their humble, meek-spirited, disinterested, and self-denying behaviour, certainly do as much honour to themselves by the practise, as benefit to others by the example.

LAWYERS generally pretend, with care and diligence, to defend or recover the rights and properties of their clients, at as small expence, and with as much expedition, as the nature of the process will admit: but the practices of too many are to create differences, or inflame those which happen, especially between wealthy persons, and then make those differences as irreconcilable and lasting as possible: these men observe, that the more money is spent in a law-suit, and the more their clients are vexed by delays, and sharpened one against another by opposition, the less willing they often are to drop proceedings, 'till a verdict or decree is obtained; like many game-

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sters, who the more they lose, the more unwilling they are to leave off play, being desirous of revenge, and in hopes also to regain what they lost. But though this is the case of many men, yet the expences and vexations attending proceedings at law, have a contrary effect on others, who observing the extravagant fees which must be paid to council, if at all considerable, and the numberless number of *Items* in attornies bills; with the attendance required, and the many delays invented to lengthen causes, and defer the obtaining of justice, together with that unintelligible, and almost unutterable gibberish by which lawyers puzzle and confound men; many observing these evils, are deterred from endeavouring to gain their rights by a method more chargeable than perhaps they can afford, or in which contention is endless, and the proceedings are so troublesome and vexatious.

SURELY a quick and speedy determination of disputes concerning property, that might be obtained for a small charge, though it should sometimes happen to be erroneous, would be infinitely preferable to the present manner of proceedings, which may be lengthened without end. Indeed if a man's whole fortune was at stake, the old method of trial by combat seems more eligible than the present, at
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least as it is managed by some pettifoggers and sollicitors: but though these men certainly deserve the worst of characters, because all their designs are mean, selfish, and base; yet there are undoubtedly many gentlemen in the practice of the law, who advise, and even assist their clients to make up differences between themselves, or by the mediation of friends; and when there is a necessity of going to law, who scorn to make it more chargeable or troublesome than is absolutely necessary, and would by no means cause or procure a delay of proceedings; but, being men of justice and probity, deplore the unavoidable querks and hinderances they meet with; and heartily wish, with every disinterested honest man, that the numberless and excruciating evils, which the nation hath long groaned under by the practice of the law, were remedied; and that this great and good work was zealously promoted where alone it can be finished, and where it can meet with no opposition but from those whose loss will be great gain to the publick.

As we have seen how well some persons who are employed to secure or recover our properties and estates have made good their plea to disinterestedness, or of serving their clients or country, we will next examine the

pretences of such who are intrusted with the care of our healths, to the like virtue, or to the service of their patients or the publick. Among these we shall find empiricks, apparently more sollicitous for fees, than for the benefit of those under their cure, and more intent on swelling an apothecary's bill (that the apothecary in return may inlarge their lists of patients) than of prescribing what is only necessary, and may soonest and most effectually contribute to the recovery of the sick person: or if the patient falls into the hands of some who dispense their own medicines, he will run the utmost risk of being gorged to death with bolusses, or drowned in floods of apozem.

Thus do many of this profession make good their pretences of acting for the good of mankind! but their selfish, base proceedings, serve as a foil to set off the conduct of the skilful, generous, benevolent physician, who really consults his patient's health, and sincerely endeavours his recovery; who refuses not to go to the poor man because of his poverty, nor protracts the recovery of the rich for the sake of his riches: such a one is *Machaon*, who in all his discourse shews an exact and penetrating judgment, with a most extensive knowledge of men and things; and

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in all his actions a virtuous manly contempt of little mean tricks and contrivances, and a thorough benevolence to his fellow-creatures : these qualities, which are ornamented with a behaviour perfectly genteel as well as humane, render *Machaon* the delight of his acquaintance, the darling of his friends, and a publick blessing to mankind. And to do justice to the gentlemen who are deservedly in the principal practice of physick in this city, they are most of them inferior to none of any profession, in learning, knowledge, and probity.

WE shall now proceed to enquire into the merits of certain politicians, who pretend the good of the publick is the principal or only design of their schemes and practices : yet in many countries they set up one man to govern, with an uncontrollable, absolute power, and establish an indefeasible right in his family, as long as it shall continue, to rule in the same arbitrary manner : thus establishing, and as much as lies in their power, perpetuating tyranny on one side, and consequently slavery on the other. And, by the strongest means, to secure unlimited obedience to the man thus set up, the people are taught to believe that God has appointed him and his descendants thus to rule over them, and they are to submit to the Lord's anointed, on pain of

capital punishment in this world, and eternal damnation in the other.

I SHALL not take pains here to shew the absurdity of supposing that God appoints one man to exercise absolute power over perhaps millions of his fellow-creatures, without affixing any mark or character on him by which he may be known, or qualifying him for so great a trust by an extraordinary measure of wisdom and virtue, (which God knows is very seldom the case of those in such elevated stations) but shall enquire what motives have probably induced some men to form so wild and wicked a scheme of government.

IN all forms of government, wherein the good and welfare of the community are only designed, and consequently power diffused through several parts of it, and all power resting in single persons limited, and in many cases of quick rotation; in all those forms of government, merit is generally the best title to, and the surest method of, acquiring employments: and in such governments especial care is taken to prevent any person or persons from accumulating so much power as may render him or them oppressive to particulars, or formidable to the publick. But, in a nation where one man is absolute, there
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are always many vice-tyrants under him; (one grand signior creates many bashaws) and in such a government, men are generally preferred by the meer caprice of the prince, or because they are fit tools to serve him in his pleasures, or in his wicked purposes of fleecing and oppressing the people. The hopes of being preferred, and admitted to a share of unjust power, and a part of the plunder of their country, are the real inducements for men to form so unreasonable and wicked a scheme, and to propagate the opinion that one man has an absolute power over a nation, and that it is for the good of the people they should be slaves.

BUT that the people of any country should be induced to believe government has any other justifiable ends than the welfare and protection of the community; or that governors, who subvert all the ends of government, should be continued in power, is an infatuation only to be matched by the people's suffering the evils of tyranny, when they have ability to remedy them, by exterminating tyrants from the face of the earth.

IF public spirit, or a sincere desire of benefiting our country, or mankind in general, was as much practised as it is pretended to, men would certainly reap more satisfaction

and pleasure from it, than by an unfair acquisition of wealth, or the usurpation of unjust and hurtful power. How short a time have men to enjoy ill-gotten wealth or power? and how many vexatious and dangerous circumstances attend the obtaining and preserving them? Is it worth a man's while to make multitudes uneasy and miserable, (as he who establishes tyranny must do) not for one generation only, but perhaps for many ages, that he may riot in wealth and power for a very few years? Can this afford the satisfaction that would arise from contributing to the happiness of a whole people, and that probably for many generations? Let the rapacious minister of state, and the haughty tyrant, if they have any remains of humanity, ask this question of their own hearts.

THAT we may observe how a public-spirited and disinterested action would appear in a prince, we will suppose a king born to, and in possession of absolute power, convening the estates of his kingdom, and making the following declaration to them:

My LORDS and GENTLEMEN,

I HAVE, at this time, called you together to consult on as important a subject as perhaps ever occasioned a prince and his people

ple to meet : no less than the restoration of your natural rights, which I apprehend have been long with-held from you.

My predecessors have, for many generations, been in possession of an absolute despotic government over this kingdom, and the same by direct and lineal succession has fallen to me : no man, that I know of, hath endeavoured to dispossess me of my power, or render my government uneasy to me ; but having observed from history, and my own experience, that numberless evils do happen to nations, and sooner or later their destruction is brought upon them by so much power being given to one man, I do therefore, after mature and deliberate consideration, and from the single motive of the good of my people (as you will readily believe) desire that you will draw up such a form of government as may effectually seclude me and my successors for ever, from more power than may be consistent with the safety and happiness of the public ^b.

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^b *Plutarch* informs us, that *Theseus* voluntarily gave up part of his regal power ; and *Hiero*, king of *Syracuse*, intended, towards the latter part of his life, to restore the *Syracusans* their liberty. *Vide M. Rollin's Hist. Romaine*, tom. 5. p. 281.

My LORDS and GENTLEMEN,

I CONJURE you on this great occasion, to lay aside all thoughts of what may be for any of your particular or private advantages, and form such a scheme as may be most for the welfare of the nation, in which you may depend on my ready concurrence.

I AM not so visionary as to expect a prince of our times, in possession of absolute power, will part with it in this manner, or that any ministry will be virtuous enough to advise him so to do: but the romantic appearance of such a transaction certainly proceeds from the little likelihood of its ever happening, and not from the unreasonableness of the action: on the contrary, a prince who should thus voluntarily give up all title to unjust power, would be much more esteemed by wise and good men, than the greatest conqueror.



OF
C H A R I T Y

Respecting OPINIONS in

R E L I G I O N,

A N D O N

P E R S E C U T I O N.

THERE is scarcely any virtue more warmly recommended in the gospel, than that charity which men should exercise towards one another respecting opinions in religion; and yet there are no people who practise it less than some of those who pretend to be the most zealous Christians. A heathen, or any other infidel, who knew nothing of the gospel, but by the practice of many of its professors, would certainly suppose, that
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instead of charity and benevolence, it taught hatred and persecution.

CHARITY, respecting opinions in religion, is not more consistent with the gospel, than consonant to humanity and good sense. If we consider the different tempers, capacities, and educations of men, the great pains taken in their youth to inculcate the utmost fondness for the religion then taught them, and the extremest aversion to all others; the various means of acquiring knowledge; the shortness and deficiency of human knowledge in general; and particularly the great difficulty of understanding many points and mysteries in religion, which are said, nevertheless, to be of the utmost consequence to us; and, above all, if we recollect what changes of opinion have been wrought in ourselves by new lights and further experience; how certain we formerly thought ourselves of what we now greatly doubt, or perhaps think the very reverse of; in one word, how we have, at different times, differed from ourselves, we shall see the reasonableness and humanity of exercising charity to others.

It is justly to be suspected, that many men are void of charity, and would be persecutors

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cutors if they had power, who are themselves hardly aware of it. When men are violently angry with, or inclined to injure any person, either in reputation or property, merely because his sentiments of religion differ from their own, such may be assured the seeds of persecution are sown in their hearts, and that the sun-shine of power is only wanted to produce the fruits.

MENS religious quarrels are generally concerning certain points or doctrines which they really know nothing of; and some usages or ceremonies that are intirely insignificant: nevertheless, these are what they frequently contend so earnestly about, and for the sake of which they hate, revile, and persecute one another. Thus a pretended zeal for what we do not understand, or at most for some poor worthless tinsel, destroys that which is most substantial, and of the greatest use and value in religion.

As the mode and fashion of worship which prevails with the people among whom we happen to be born or educated, commonly determines our external religion, so our natural tempers causing different ideas and conceptions concerning God, in a great measure direct our internal religion. If mens
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minds were strictly examined, I doubt not but it would appear, that almost every man sets up a God after his own heart. We are advised indeed to be God-like, but however short we may fall (as we must infinitely) of being like God, we are very apt to represent God like ourselves. Cholerick vindictive persons worship an angry revengeful deity; the cruel and inexorable fear a God who punishes without mercy or forgiveness, even what himself had rendered unavoidable; but the mild-tempered and humane adore a being of great goodness and loving-kindness.

ONE hindrance to the exercise of charity, is a fancy some men have entertained, that their religious opinions and practices are dictated to them by immediate revelation from God. Two consequences then will follow, *viz.* All their tenets so revealed cannot but be right, and all such as are contrary to them must be wrong. I meddle not with sacred persons in antient times, who frequently, as we are told, conversed with God, were sent by him on errands and messages, and to whom he clearly revealed himself and his will, confirming all these revelations by miracles; neither will I deny the necessity of immediate divine revelation to enable men to understand divers passages in scripture; but

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many of these modern pretenders might easily, I should think, be cured of this conceit of their being inspired, if they would lay aside enthusiasm for a moment, and ask themselves this sober question, *viz.* What assurance they have that they may not mistake their own imaginations for divine manifestations?

God cannot be supposed to communicate his mind and will to men by inward revelations, without giving them some undoubted criterion whereby they may infallibly distinguish such revelations from all thoughts or imaginations that are purely their own. But, I believe, far the greater part of mankind in our times, now miracles are ceased, will readily allow, that they have no such criterion, nor any knowledge in religious any more than in civil affairs, but what they obtain by natural and ordinary means. If that be true, then those people, who imagine they are favoured with such inward revelations of the mind of God, must have a different faculty of distinction from the rest of their species, or it follows that they may, and undoubtedly do, mistake their own imaginations for divine communications; and indeed the wild and extravagant conceptions and actions of men, in our times, pretending to inward divine
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revelations, do sufficiently prove they are under very great delusions, and that their heads are much more distempered than enlightned.

ANOTHER obstruction to charity proceeds from a high opinion that many men, who do not pretend to inward divine revelation, entertain of their great abilities in judging of religious matters beyond others: these having read and studied huge volumes of glossaries and commentaries, which men have wrote to explain the laws given by God to his creatures, they imagine their knowledge much superior to that of the generality of men; and, assuming a magisterial authority to dictate to others, they brand with very hard names (where they have not power to do worse) all who take the liberty of judging for themselves in religious opinions, and by that means happen to dissent from them. But, as many of these learned men have not only directly opposed one another in their sentiments of religion, but often-times have also contradicted themselves; this might serve to abate their pride, as it certainly demonstrates how little they are to be depended on.

BUT supposing certain persons have more knowledge in religious matters than the generality of men; if such believe that their opinions,

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nions, if received, will be of advantage, what means so likely to propagate them, as exercising good-nature and charity? Why so much fiery zeal in some, for the salvation of other mens souls? If only the benefit of mankind in this world, and their salvation in the next, were really designed, then instruction, advice, exhortation, and good example, would be the only methods pursued. We may be sure, in that case, persecution would not be once thought of, much less practised; for if men were in earnest to promote one another's happiness hereafter, they would exercise love and kindness to them here.

MEN may entertain and profess different sentiments in arts and sciences, without incurring any danger from their governors or their equals: the reason is evident; in these there is, comparatively, no particular interest distinct from truth, to be served, but in religion the case is different. The real cause then of persecution on account of religion, is, that the persecutors have some wicked purpose, for their own advantage, to serve: this is so plain, that it is amazing people of all nations do not see it, and put an end to so impudent and cruel a practice.

MANKIND have submitted to government for defence and security of their persons and property ; not for the regulating their religious opinions, that cannot be done by authority. No edicts can force belief, though they may oblige to outward compliances ; neither can right and wrong, respecting religion, be settled by power. What has government then to do with mens religious sentiments, if they are not prejudicial to society ?

THE most plausible pretence assigned for obliging men to a uniformity of opinions in religion, is the peace of a nation or commonwealth ; but this is very absurd ; for besides the impossibility of bringing men to such an uniformity, it is not necessary for that purpose. In *Holland*, where all sorts of religions are tolerated, and every man suffered to worship God according to the dictates of his conscience, the publick peace is as well preserved as in any country of *Europe*. If magistrates exert their authority to the punishment of evil-doers, and the praise of them that do well ; if priests are not suffered to stir them up one against another, the publick tranquillity will be maintained, notwithstanding the variety of religious opinions, or forms of worship. Indeed no means ought to be used to induce or force men to the practice

practice of any religion contrary to their consciences, for many reasons; and particularly because so far as those means prevail, they make men hypocrites.

PERSECUTORS on account of religion, however dignified or distinguished, are publick enemies, and deserve to be treated as such. Of these noxious creatures there seem to be two species; one chiefly constitutional, the other political. The first are a compound of ignorance, passion, and pride; they know so little that they are positive in every thing, and suppose none can possibly differ from them but through obstinacy; and obstinacy ought surely to be punished in all but themselves. These creatures, when heated by religious frenzy, commonly called zeal, are fit to burn up or destroy whatever opposes them, and commit all manner of cruelty and wickedness in the name of the Lord. Such as these compose the mob of persecutors, who drink, roar, bully, or fight, for religion; they are proper tools for the other sort of men, who have knowledge enough to see the little certainty in many opinions, but perceiving that certain notions, if they obtain sufficient credit, will contribute to gain wealth and power for them, and be a means of setting up an ecclesiastical authority over the people, these men

stick at nothing to get those notions established; and sacrifice charity and humanity to their pride, covetousness, and love of tyranny.

WHEN we take a view of the infinite mischiefs perpetrated by a certain set of men; what countries have been depopulated by their means, and how many millions of mens bodies destroyed for the sake of their souls; is it not amazing that the bulk of mankind should be such dupes to a few? One would think, these terrible and shocking effects of priestcraft, as well as many other reasons, should excite the laity to the exercise of charity towards one another, and deter them from bestowing too much riches or power upon men, who, in many countries, have so generally used them to the prejudice, and frequently to the destruction, of the givers.



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TRAVELLING

I N T O

FOREIGN COUNTRIES.

Written in the Year 1731.

A HUMOUR has for some time prevailed among abundance of our gentry, and others of both sexes, not only to ramble into foreign countries, but also to reside there; many of them keeping country-houses abroad, particularly in the neighbourhood of *Paris*: as these practices cannot but often-times be attended with prejudice to the travellers, and dishonour and injury to their country, it is high time they should be animadverted on.

As travelling, though managed with discretion and frugality, is chargeable, and the

money spent by *British* subjects in foreign countries is a loss to their own, none ought to travel, much less reside abroad, but those who have business, or are capable of making such observations, and acquiring such useful knowledge, as may be of service both to themselves and the publick: but with how little discretion or frugality the greatest part of our countrymen travel, is known, and almost become proverbial, in all parts of *Europe*; and what acquisitions of useful knowledge they make abroad, is no less apparent by their wise conduct when they return.

TRAVELLING being now thought a necessary part of education, the youth among our gentry, without proper distinction, or observation on their capacities, are commonly taken from school or the university at seventeen or eighteen years of age, before they have made any considerable progress in learning, or know almost any thing of the laws or constitution of their own country, and sent abroad; either because the youth hates his studies, and has a rambling head, or the parent or guardian a weak one, and complies with custom against reason; and with the foolish inclination of the youth, against his true interest and benefit.

ONE would think some people imagine
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that making the tour of *France* or *Italy*, would inspire understanding. Alas! he who goes abroad a fool, though he rambles over all *Europe*, will come home a fool: the only difference I could ever observe among such travellers is, that those of the stupid sort are like some insipid liquors, that however tortured by the chymist's art, will yield nothing but a mere *caput mortuum*, whilst others of some spirit and vivacity may be sublimated into fops and coxcombs.

THIS wise management of sending our youth abroad without distinction, is attended with those consequences every judicious person would expect; when they are from under the eye and restraint of their parents or guardians, they immerse in all manner of lewdness and debauchery, and often-times are also corrupted in their principles, both religious and political.

ALL who have travelled into *Roman* Catholick countries, know there are swarms of *Irish Romish* priests, and other cunning emissaries of that religion, who use their utmost endeavours to gain proselytes both to their religion and politicks; this they frequently effect, by misrepresenting our religion and government to those who know too little of

either to contradict or disprove them. If some few have the sense to object against transubstantiation and other absurdities of the *Romish* religion, these cunning sophisters shew them several parts of *Christianity*, which, they pretend, though falsely, are liable to as great exceptions: and from thence infer the necessity of giving up the understanding to be guided by the church, which they say is infallible. Thus our youth frequently become tainted with the worst religion that ever was invented, or are left entirely destitute of any. There is another art very common amongst these deceivers of men, who compass heaven and earth to make one proselyte; when they hear of a person in an ill-state of health, or dejected in mind, and consequently the more liable to impressions of religion, if they can then gain admittance, the danger of dying out of communion with the only true church, the torments of hell, with the most frightful images and tremendous circumstances, are painted to that weak person's imagination; who, being thus terrified with the danger of damnation, is willing to catch at any thing that carries an appearance of hope or safety: he is then strongly urged to become a member of the true church, as the only sure ground of hope; and thus embraces, for deliverance, one of the greatest evils that could

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befal him. I knew a very hopeful young gentleman of a worthy family, who was taken at such a critical juncture, and thus wrought upon to become a *Roman* Catholick; and, though he lived many years after, not only continued such 'till he died, but became so great a bigot, that he could not enjoy himself in a *Protestant* nation, nor die easy without leaving a large estate to the church, to the great prejudice and disappointment of his family, and loss to his country.

THE persons who gain such an influence over our youth, and sometimes over those of riper years, as to pervert them from the religion of their education, will no doubt beget in them also an aversion to a *Protestant* prince, and the form of government in their own country; though, if they were capable of forming a just judgment, they would see, that the difference between being a member of the *Romish* communion and the *Protestant*, being subjects in a limited monarchy and one absolute, is the same as being in body, mind, and property, the most despicable slaves, or living in that perfect freedom of all those wherewith God and nature hath made them free.

As it is become a fashion for ladies to travel, as well as gentlemen, the same arts are
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used to profelyte them, and they are also shewn the gaudy vestments of the priests ; the fine statues, pictures, and other rich furniture of the churches ; the pomp and ceremonies of processions ; with other amusements contrived to cheat weak minds, and which are but too successful to so bad a purpose.

THIS humour of rambling in the male part of our nation, though very indiscrete and prejudicial, is not near so unaccountable as in the female. That young fellows should be impatient of restraint, follow loose amours, and be desirous of a larger swing in vice and folly, than they can well take under the eye of their parents or guardians, is not strange ; but surely none of these inducements have any place with the other sex : and yet something must be very engaging that can prevail on them to get over that fear of danger, and aversion to hardships, so natural to women ; not to say any thing of those shocks to modesty, almost inseparable from sea-voyages and long journeys. If real necessity obliged the ladies to undergo these inconveniences, I doubt they would think them great hardships ; but being matter of choice, they are seen in another light.

IF a lady has a fit of the vapours, she must go to *Montpellier*, to the *Spaw*, or to *Paris* :
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might not the *Bath* or *Tunbridge*, or a journey to *York*, be as effectual a remedy? I believe it might; and would cost the husband or parent much less, and our country nothing; whereas what is expended abroad, is so much lost to the nation.

THIS leads me to consider the other, and indeed more pernicious practice of residing in foreign countries, by which the estates and incomes of many *English* families are principally expended there: if these people divide their time, as some of them do, pretty equally betwixt their own and a foreign country, I doubt far the greater part of their incomes are spent abroad; which is so true, that they are obliged to live niggardly here, the better to support extravagancy there. This certainly tends very much to the discouragement of our tradesmen and manufacturers; and, if not timely prevented, will greatly impoverish the nation.

A LATE edict of the *French* king against pilgrimages into foreign countries, plainly shews, how sensible they are, in *France*, of the ill consequences that arise from this practice: if the *French* will play the fool and strole about, they are obliged to do it in their own country,

country, and there spend the money that belongs to it.

SOME of the ring-leaders of this dance into foreign countries, to carry families and keep country houses there, are creatures who have taken it in their heads to travel without language, curiosity, or capacity for observation: all they can talk of when they come home is, that they have had the honour to hunt with the king of *France's* hounds, and their ladies to dine with the queen of *France's* women of the bedchamber's gentlewomen.

As much of our wealth has of late years been expended in travelling and sojourning in foreign countries, I cannot but think it a necessary inquiry, what useful acquisitions have been made, or what equivalent we have received? I must confess it is highly probable, that, by means of our ladies travelling, some of our noble families may be honoured with a *French* dancing-master's son for their heirs; and some of our wealthy merchants may have their *Plebeian* blood ennobled by a *French* marquis.

THE reasonable and laudable design of travelling is to become acquainted with the languages, customs, manners, laws, and inter-
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ests of foreign nations : the trade, different manufactures, and produce of countries : the situation and strength of towns and cities. If our ladies, and lady-like gentlemen, the beaux, who go abroad, do not appear to have had any of these designs, or to have made any improvements of this nature, yet it must be confessed we are greatly obliged to them for other advantages, which I doubt not but they think much preferable. Have they not brought among us the becoming fashions of the *French coiffure*, the *robe de chambre* of the women, and the *toupé* and *solitaire* of the men? Have not our ladies learnt, in their travels, to sit up whole nights at gaming; a practice by which their beauty, their virtue, and their husbands estates, receive equal improvement? From whence came masquerades, those innocent amusements, where all distinctions of age and quality are lost; where the sexes are disguised and promiscuously blended; where husbands and parents may have the satisfaction to know, that all the outworks, at least, of their wives and daughters virtue are given up; after which I will leave them to judge, how long the body of the place is likely to hold out: from whence, I say, came all these blessed practices? They are not natives of *Britain*; no, they have been taught us by foreigners, or
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imported by our judicious and virtuous travellers.

THERE is no doubt to be made but great advantages, both publick and private, may be gained by travelling into foreign countries; there is hardly any nation, from which something useful may not be learned: but then those persons only should go abroad, who have discretion to chuse what is best; and not such, who, like some other creatures, will suck up nothing but the poison. It is also much to be wished, that every traveller would reflect, that the honour of his country is greatly concerned in his behaviour abroad. But as there are multitudes of people, male and female, of no other service to the publick than merely to spend their fortunes; surely such should be kept at home for that purpose: and I cannot but think it would be for the benefit of our country, to hinder our ladies from being carried abroad, and much to its honour (as some body has said before me) to prevent the exportation of fools.

OF
B E G G A R S
AND
T H I E V E S.

Written in the Year 1730.

IT is certain, that the complaints so usual of the present times being worse than the former, are too general to signify much; and perhaps too common, in all times, to have any great regard paid them by wise men: but I wish the present want of a due concern for what relates to the publick, did not in some measure verify the observation.

THE occasion of my falling into these reflections, is the multitude of beggars in this city, and the many villanies and robberies so frequent at present in all parts of the nation;
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some of which are of a species unknown to former ages, and all committed in a degree, and with shocking circumstances, peculiar to our own times. Have not letters for some time past been almost daily sent, to extort money from people on pain of being murdered, and their houses and families burnt? Have not these threats been actually put in execution, and that not only in places thinly inhabited, and remote from magistrates and officers of justice, but in the most populous towns and cities? It is but a few months since, that children of seven or eight years old were taken in the fact of robbing a goldsmith's shop, and some of thirteen or fourteen attempted to rob in the streets by violence. If such things had happened among the antient *Romans*, they would have thought them omens of impending calamities, and have decreed sacrifices and lustrations to appease the incensed deities, and purge the infected city.

'TILL within these ten or twelve years, *London* was the most remarkable city in *Europe* for the safety of its inhabitants, and others who had occasion to walk the streets late at night; but now, it is not without the greatest danger, that persons can be out of their houses after ten at night. Surely it is necessary that the causes of these evils should

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be discovered, and effectual remedies applied. In an inquiry of this nature, the vast number of poor, whose necessities prompt many of them to the most wicked and desperate undertakings, come naturally within our consideration: these we shall place in two classes. *First*, Those who, by age, and other infirmities, are rendered incapable of working. *Secondly*, Such as are able to work, but not willing. The first sort are really objects of charity; and I hardly know a greater scandal to any people, than that such should be seen in the streets begging for relief. Undoubtedly many of them chuse rather to strol about in this manner, at large, than be confined to hospitals, and other proper places; but the question is not what manner of life they will chuse, but which is really best for them and the publick. When they are once habituated to a sober regular way of living, it will become more agreeable to themselves; and as many of them are maimed, and have distempers very disagreeable and nauseous, it is absolutely necessary for such to be kept out of sight: I say, it is absolutely necessary, not only as such sights are very shocking to every one, but many times of the worst consequence to those we cannot be too careful of,---I mean breeding women, and posterity. How common is it for these wretches, in order to ex-

cite charity, to expose such distorted limbs and filthy sores, as cannot be seen by any one without pain, and are frequently attended with the worst consequences to women with child? I have lately seen, in the day-time, a man (if I so may properly call a wretch, who wants every feature of the human face) led through many of the principal streets of this city, who is such an object as I cannot now think on without horror, nor describe without too rudely shocking the imagination of my readers. Is such a creature fit to be seen by the most delicate of the human species, and in circumstances the most dangerous that can be imagined? Surely if we have any regard to humanity, to our own happiness, or the good of posterity, we shall find a remedy for this evil.

THE second sort of poor we have mentioned, are such as are able to work, but not willing: that these are very numerous, wants no other proof than the observation of every one; but that the number is still considerably larger than it appears, would be very apparent, if all those who falsely pretend to be of the first class, *viz.* such, who, through age, or other infirmities, are rendered incapable of working, were found out: we should then soon find the dumb speak, the deaf hear, the

blind

blind see, the lame walk, and even the aged become young. Many Impostors of these kinds have been discovered, and it is not to be doubted, but by care and vigilance, many more might be detected.

WHEN we consider the vast number of able-bodied idle poor that are suffered to infest the nation, and this city in particular, we cannot be at a loss to account for the many villainies and robberies so frequently committed; and if we reflect on their children, whom they are suffered to bring up in the same idle, beggarly, thieving way in which themselves have lived, it will appear a very growing and threatening evil. It is impossible to walk the streets at night, without observing heaps of these miserable little creatures of both sexes, from four or five, to ten or twelve years of age, crowded together at doors and other places, and exposed almost naked to all weathers. At the keys, where goods and merchandize are landed, they swarm; and are constantly employed in stealing sugar, tobacco, and other commodities they can easily hide and carry off. What can be expected from such as these, but that they will all continue beggars or thieves? stock the streets with one, and supply the gallows with the other? Thus are multitudes lost to the publick,

lick, and instead of being made useful, become extremely burthensome.

• THAT it is possible to prevent beggars from appearing in the streets of *London* at least, I think is plain from an example I shall bring. In *France* there are more poor than in *England*, yet in *Paris* not a beggar to be seen, at least there was not about sixteen years since, when I was there; and surely we are capable of as good regulations as the *French*. But we have an instance at home of the poor, in a large body of people, being so generally maintained or employed, that there is not one beggar among them.---I mean the people called *Quakers*, whose singularities we are very apt to deride; but that in this they are singular, is an honour to them, and a scandal to others.

AMONG the *Quakers* (if I am rightly informed) no poor are maintained in idleness who are able to work; none suffered to want who are helpless; nor no money misapplied that is raised for the service of the poor.

Excellent

• Since this essay was first published, we have found, by experience, that the regulation here mentioned, is practicable: for, during the mayoralty of that worthy and excellent magistrate Sir *John Barnard*, scarcely a beggar was to be seen in the streets of this city.

Excellent management, and well worthy of imitation !

THE methods that seem most likely to lessen the number of villainies and robberies among us, are, *First*, To oblige the poor, who are able, to work. *Secondly*, To bring up their children to labour, not to learning ; and as much as possible to invent such punishments for criminals, as may reclaim the offender, if the crime is not capital ; and whether it is or not, deter others from the like practices. The present methods of punishment for the smaller crimes, are generally burning in the hand, or whipping, and then the criminals are discharged ; but I have known several instances that they committed fresh facts the very day they got out of prison ; and have soon been confined again, and perhaps hanged. If we impartially consider the circumstances of these wretches, what better can we expect ? they never (I suppose) go out of prison with a penny of money ; they are known to have been malefactors : who will employ, or even relieve such, or how can they subsist ? would not therefore the keeping these to hard labour in some open publick place, where they might be seen, be more likely to reclaim them, and deter others from the like practices ? As to the punish-

ment for capital offences; the manner of it has so little solemnity, and the criminals are suffered so to intoxicate themselves with strong liquors, that it many times appears more like a mob-triumph, than an execution. But this subject, as well as divers others, has been treated on in so excellent and masterly a manner in a pamphlet, intitled, *An Enquiry into the Causes of the frequent Executions at Tyburn, &c.* published in the year 1725, that I shall rather recommend that to the perusal of the publick, than insist further on what is there set in so strong and clear a light.

THERE are, it is true, laws in being for the regulation of the evils here complained of; but that they are not effectual, or not duly executed, is past all doubt; and I think it is as much past doubt, that the legislature may enact such, and so inforce the due execution of them, that these general and calamitous grievances may be redressed. But the most likely methods of effecting this desirable work, I shall leave to the consideration of others of more leisure and abilities; contenting myself with having hinted these things at a time when they never more wanted redress, and as the parliament is now sitting, the hopes and expectations of the nation is raised, to see effectual means provided; that
such

such poor as, through age or other infirmities, are disabled from maintaining themselves, may be maintained by the publick ; that such miserable objects, as cannot be looked upon without horror, nor seen by many, without the utmost danger, may be confined ; that the children of the poor may be considered as the children of the publick, and brought up to labour and industry, and that such poor as are able to work, but are found begging, may be obliged to work : and, lastly, that such punishments may be thought of for criminals, as may make them useful to the publick, who have not capitally offended, and deter others from committing the like crimes.



SOME
CONSIDERATIONS
ON
BANKRUPTS.

Written in the Year 1731.

AS there has been, for some time, a bill depending in the house of commons, for preventing frauds committed by bankrupts, and other good purposes, the advocates for insolvent debtors are extremely industrious, both in conversation and writing, to represent the common methods used against such, as very cruel, and much exceeding the hardships they suffer in other countries. I will not assert, that what is published with this design, has been wrote by persons who are now bankrupts, or intend to become such the first convenient opportunity, when a law is made

made to their minds ; but I am well satisfied, that if an act should pass so favourable to bankrupts, as these men seem to desire, it would be a great encouragement to the practice of roguery, which is already but too frequent among us.

If those who want compassion for the unfortunate, are ill men, such who plead for the making of laws in favour of all who call themselves so, without proper and necessary distinctions, are very weak or very wicked. In order therefore to form the better judgment, what measures should be taken, and what degree of compassion extended to those called unfortunate persons, we should examine if many of them do not deserve other epithets, and whether some wholesome severities might not be of great service to such traders as are in most danger, or most inclined to become bankrupts.

In order to do this impartially, let us take a view what sort of men they generally are who become bankrupt. Among those, how many honest, careful, prudent, industrious, frugal persons do we see ? I do not deny, but there may be a few such, who are reduced by unavoidable losses ; but of that very small number, most of them become insolvent by
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the iniquity of others, such as constitute the bulk of bankrupts : I mean, those who overtrade themselves, and, by endeavouring to gain riches, rather hastily than securely, expose their own substance, and that of others, to unreasonable and dishonest hazards ; such who spend in luxury and extravagance, more than their profits or income, are given to gaming, or the infamous and destructive practice of stock-jobbing, which is indeed the worst kind of gaming ; or, lastly, those who use all their art to gain credit, with a design to cheat those who trust them.

SINCE it is evident, that far the greater number of bankrupts become so by some of these methods, how necessary is it to distinguish betwixt men who are really unable to pay their debts, and have been, by unavoidable losses, reduced to those circumstances, and such who design a fraud, or have brought themselves to poverty by extravagancy, ill management, or no management at all ? For this purpose all insolvent persons should be obliged to produce their books, and thereby satisfy the sufferers they are unable to pay them, and by what means they are rendered so ; if they cannot do this, it ought to be taken for granted, they have destroyed their books, to conceal ill management or roguery from
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their creditors, and they ought undoubtedly to be severely punished.

THE most plausible argument I have met with against using severity to bankrupts is, that many, through fear of punishment, may, when they find themselves insolvent, carry their effects into foreign countries, to the loss both of their creditors and the nation. Indeed I think no nation should protect rogues of any sort; for the cause of justice and honesty is the cause of mankind. But if some should get away, and find refuge in foreign countries, is exile no punishment? Is it agreeable for a man, who perhaps understands no language but his own, and is too old to learn any other, to live among those he cannot converse with; leave his relations and friends, and never return to his native country? But I am so far from thinking severity would occasion many insolvent persons to quit their country, that I believe it the only method to prevent any becoming bankrupt but by unavoidable losses; and such ought always to be treated with the utmost humanity.

ANOTHER popular reason against punishing debtors, by imprisoning their persons, is, that so many hands are thereby lost to their families,

families, and the publick. Let it be considered, that if these were merchants or traders, and not manufacturers or handicrafts-men, perhaps they maintained their families at the expence of others, and did no more good to the publick out of prison, than in it: but I confess, that maintaining debtors, or any others, idly in prison, for a considerable time, is a very bad practice. When it is thought necessary to continue criminals in prison after they are convicted, they should be obliged to work at such employments, by which they may be made useful to the publick, and so laborious as may be a severe punishment to them. And if such debtors likewise, as shall be found guilty of endeavouring to defraud their creditors, by concealing their effects, or otherwise, and who were by the act against bankrupts lately expired, liable to be hanged, were, instead thereof, chained betwixt a highwayman and a pickpocket, with inscriptions on each, signifying their crimes, and made every day to sweep and clean the streets, particularly near the *Royal-Exchange*, to be fed with bread and water, and thus employed for seven years, I cannot but think this punishment would soon put an end to such vile practices.

IF some chastisements less severe, or of shorter

shorter duration, were inflicted on such who lose their creditors money by gaming or stock-jobbing, or spend it in luxury and extravagancy, it might tend very much to prevent those enormities, and the grievous calamities occasioned by them. But if the legislature should not think fit to appoint particular punishments for offenders of this kind, it is in the power of honest men, by neither trusting nor conversing with them, very much to discountenance and lessen the number of persons so injurious to trade and society.

THE practices so common among traders, not only to accept credit when they know they shall not be able to discharge the debt, but to use all their art and cunning to obtain it, are not treated with that severity nor contempt they deserve. If such a one happens to be of an entertaining conversation, he shall be called a very honest fellow, and received into the best companies, though it is certain he is a very great rogue, and it ought to be reckoned very scandalous to converse with him.

MENS trading beyond their stocks and abilities, often runs them into great difficulties, and considerably increases the number of bankrupts; when such as are rich practise this,

this, it shews an insatiable desire of gain, but rarely answers their expectation, and that for several plain reasons. A merchant, or tradesman, who buys on credit, must give more for his goods, though he pays punctually at the time agreed for, than if he bought for ready-money; this, on many commodities, is 10 *per cent.* but if he is known to be dilatory in his payments, the difference is still considerably more. Besides this disadvantage, a man, over-desirous of extending his trade, will be very apt to send too much of his effects into foreign countries; from whence, many know, by sad experience, how difficult it is to get returns; and also give large credit without proper caution. This latter is many times a great injury both to debtors and creditors; for when people have a large credit, they are very apt to look upon what they are in possession of as their own, and encrease their expences accordingly. For these reasons, and many more which might be given, even wealthy men seldom add to their estates by trading beyond their stocks. Some indeed pretend they trade so largely to employ a great number of people, and more for the publick benefit than their own. I deny not but pride may co-operate with avarice in many of these; but that men trade beyond their abilities, and pay those they employ or deal with

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very ill, for the good of them and the publick, I shall as soon believe, as that a beau dresses in lace, fringe, and embroidery, but pays for neither, (as is often the case) not to adorn his dear person, but to employ poor manufacturers, and encourage trade : or that usurers, or a usurious corporation, lend money at extortionate interest or extravagant premiums, in charity to needy and distressed people, and not from a covetous and rapacious desire of gain.

If trading beyond their stocks is prejudicial to rich men, it is much more so to those who have little of their own. A man of a large estate may sustain many losses, without being disabled from paying his debts ; but this is not the case of him whose capital is but small. It ought to be a maxim with all traders, that those who deal principally on credit, should not give large credit to others, nor venture much beyond sea, but live frugally, and content themselves with a retail or ready-money business, 'till they have gained a stock sufficient for a more extended trade. Yet how frequently is the very reverse of this practised ? Men with no other stock, but a great deal of impudence, make grand appearances, and launch into foreign commerce : this soon reduces them to streights and difficulties, and generally

generally ends in the ruin of themselves and many others.

THE complaints we every day hear of so many shops shut up, so many houses to be let, even in the most frequented streets, and the great decay of trade, and the clamours that are hereupon raised against the times, put me in mind of a gentleman who is troubled with a dropsy, and a complication of other distempers, which occasions him to find fault with his constitution, though naturally a very good one, blame his physicians, and often change them, but goes on to drink his three bottles a day, without seeming once to think what is the real cause of his distempers. As this gentleman's cure, if it is ever effected, must proceed chiefly from temperance; so must these evils complained of, be principally remedied by frugality. Nevertheless, I am far from thinking that treaties with foreign nations, or laws at home, may not be made greatly to promote and extend our commerce.

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S T O C K - J O B B E R S .

Written in the Year 1729.

AS some account is here intended to be given of the vile and injurious part of society called *Stock-jobbers*, it is thought necessary to premise, that no reflections are in the least designed to be cast on such who are really interested in the funds, and came honestly by that interest; or those who pay for the stock they buy, deliver what they sell, and use no unfair methods of raising or lowering the prices of it: undoubtedly persons of the best families, estates, and characters in the kingdom are so interested, and for them thus to buy or sell stocks, is as reputable as to buy or sell land; neither has the honest broker, who faithfully discharges his commissions, and does not buy or sell for himself, or knowingly for others, what he or they

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cannot

cannot pay for or deliver, any share in the following characters. It is therefore apparent, that no honest man can receive the least prejudice, nor need be any ways uneasy at what may be here said : and as to those of a contrary character, it is as much for the good of mankind that they should be exposed, as that rocks and quicksands should be discovered and made known.

WE shall, therefore, without further preface, give a short description of the persons, educations, accomplishments, and practices of these creatures.

As to the first, I believe there is not such a groupe of figures to be seen any where in this town, as in and about the hundreds of *Exchange-Alley*. In some you discover attention without reflection, and cunning without knowledge ; in others, a certain troubled muddiness of complexion ; and in the generality of their faces, a certain eagerness, and savage fierceness, rarely to be met with in civilized countries, but among madmen or gamblers.

THE education of these people has generally been suitable to their present employments : such as were not brought up in the *Alley*,

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Alley, or are not broken tradesmen, or shopkeepers, have many of them been coffee-house boys, drawers at taverns, and alehouse keepers; but I have not been able to learn for a certainty, whether any of them have followed, or been brought up to the useful practice of shoe-cleaning.

WE come next to their accomplishments, which may be all summed up in one word, IMPUDENCE. For as a certain eminent orator among the antients, being asked what was the first qualification necessary to form an orator, replied, Action; and being again questioned what was the second and third, still answered Action; so may it be said of impudence to knavish stock-jobbers: for as a well-formed oration, delivered with aukward gestures, or no action at all, would be disagreeable or insipid, and can only answer the design of the orator, when pronounced with propriety and energy of action; so an elaborate and well-contrived piece of knavery, can be only rendered effectual, when conducted by the power and force of impudence. That this qualification is learnt to perfection in and about *Exchange-Alley*, can be doubted by none who have at all observed those who compose the *Pandæmonium* at *J----*'s, where *Jews* and *Christians* are equal proficient;

and young lads become the hope and joy of their friends and tutors, by arriving at maturity of impudence in their tender years.

THE practices of these people are frequently to sell stock when they have none to deliver, and buy when they have not money to pay for it. On this account they are by one another denominated *bulls* and *bears*, and indeed with propriety enough, considering how many people are worried to death, or torn in pieces by them. But they do not only buy and sell stock they cannot pay for or deliver, but oftentimes such quantities, that all they are worth will not pay half a crown in the pound, on the difference of price, which frequently happens between the time of the contract, and that for taking and delivering the stock. It will then be asked, what they do? They break, and sometimes turn highwaymen; which is happy for the publick, because in that capacity they cannot do so much mischief as in the other; besides, they then soon meet with the fate they had long before deserved: but more often they compound the matter, and return into the *Alley*, which some of them have done ten or twelve times, to carry on the like frauds: they die, and for a time are buried, but rise again with the same numerical bodies, and though with
putrefied,

putrefied, nauseous reputations, yet among such a fraternity, who have most of them undergone the same fate, and consequently are not very squeamish, they are soon received again.

ANOTHER practice they are often guilty of, and which indeed is but too successful in promoting their villainous designs, is to raise strange stories, and create false news, to terrify the credulous and unwary, when they are minded to buy stock; and, on the other hand, to pretend extraordinary news, and prospects of great advantages, when they are disposed to sell: for these laudable purposes they not only act singly, but form cabals, and combine in parties, the better to succeed in their vile purposes. And to such a pitch of iniquity are many of these wretches arrived, that it is notorious, they have frequently by such managements deluded and ruined those to whom they have had the greatest obligations, and professed the most affectionate friendship. Thus as the poets feigned that *Circe* (by whom they meant voluptuousness or pleasure) changed men into beasts; so an inordinate desire of gain, when men are got over the restraints of honour or conscience, will transform them into devils.

Who, without indignation, can reflect on the injuries these contemptible wretches are daily doing, and the mighty mischiefs they effected, even such as brought the nation to the brink of destruction, not ten years since! One would almost think mankind were in a confederacy against themselves, to suffer such creatures so to injure them; but, in the calamities that were some years since brought upon the nation, I deny not, that these ravenous sharks were aided by some formidable *Leviathans*.

NOTWITHSTANDING these instruments of fraud and deceit are so mean and contemptible in all other respects, it must be owned they are giants in wickedness; which evidently proves, that a very small share of understanding, if applied to that purpose, is sufficient to form a very great rogue.

As these remarks are made with no other view than to caution honest, unwary men, against the practices of dishonest, wicked, and voracious stock-jobbers, so it is heartily desired that the intention of the writer may be answered, who thinks he cannot wish better for mankind, than that the innocent and honest may be preserved from the designs and practices of the corrupt and the wicked.

A
 C A V E A T
 A G A I N S T
 B U B B L I N G.

Written in the Year 1732.

Felix, quem faciunt aliena pericula cautum.

HOR.

THE more common and flagrant any vices are, and the more injurious to the publick, the greater care will every wise government, and all honest men, take to discountenance and prevent them as much as possible,

OUR times have abounded with fraudulent managements of companies and corporations, and in visionary schemes to gain wealth ; vi-

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sionary,

fionary, respecting most of the adventurers, but too substantial to the contrivers. Notwithstanding these practices were attended with such fatal consequences about * twelve years since, as utterly to ruin vast numbers of families, and greatly distress the nation; yet we have lately seen people as eagerly engaged in the same measures, as though no losses had ever happened, or no calamities been ever felt by them.

THE principal inducements for men to become adventurers in so many wild projects, are the hopes of making large profits, and gaining riches, by quicker methods than industry and frugality, and without the fatigues of trade, or the trouble of looking after their own business, or their own estates. No scheme, with these tempting appearances, is too extravagant or improbable to gain credit; and yet so ridiculous and impracticable are many of them, that one would think people were in a confederacy against themselves, in a plot against their understandings, to be so deceived: in many cases the deceiver, and the deceived, though with different intentions, cooperate in the cheat. Was not this alacrity of believing so epidemical, men would not have the impudence to propose such gross absurdities to mankind, as we see every day imposed

* In the year 1720.

imposed on them for the greatest truths and certainties.

SINGLE women, and others incapable of trade or the management of estates, whose substance is in money, and their incomes but small, have the most plausible excuses, and strongest inducements for venturing in these projects; but certainly it behoveth them to consider, if they had not better be contented with such interest as they can make securely, than run the risque of losing their all, in hopes of greater, though very uncertain, advantages; and more especially, as those who are unfit to carry on trade, have many times no means left of repairing a broken fortune.

ONE of the most remarkable frauds that prevailed in the last age was alchymy, or the making gold out of other metals; we have not only seen this lately revived, but sublimed into a project our forefathers never thought of,---The making gold out of nothing---For what less is it to propose giving large interest without profits, and making such dividends as all the specie in the nation was not sufficient to pay? These hopeful schemes have been reserved for the honour and benefit of our times.

AMONG

AMONG the numberless number of projects that were ingendered a few years since, how few lived to produce one dividend? And though they subsisted so short a time, that they might well be compared to a certain insect, which comes into being, and in a few hours acts its part and dies; they yet lived long enough, like the *Egyptian* locusts, to darken the land, and devour almost every green thing; and we might to this day have been plagued with them (as we are with some of their spawn) had they not been pretty generally dissipated by a wholesome act of parliament.

As fond as people are of trusting their money in companies and corporations, where they see or know so little how it is secured or managed, yet they are continually exclaiming against the fraudulent practices of them, and observing that men are no sooner chosen managers or directors of publick companies, but they generally forfeit the good characters they had in their private capacities. This observation is just; and, if the causes of the alteration were duly attended to, people might see the folly of reposing so much confidence, where there is generally so little foundation for it. Men are not thoroughly known 'till tried by power, want, or opportunities of
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gaining wealth unfairly. The trusts reposed in the managers, agents, or servants of publick companies, are often-times of greater value than men are intrusted with by private persons ; and we see many who would not lose their reputations, or run the risque of punishment, for small sums, who stick at no villainy when the prize is large enough : the opportunity of making a fortune by knavery, is too great a temptation for most men to resist, and therefore ought as seldom as possible to be put in their power. Many are very apt to presume on the carelessness with which publick affairs are often managed, and hope they shall, by that means, escape being discovered ; or, if they are discovered, that either their riches, which cover a multitude of faults, will protect them, or those whose business it is to detect and prosecute offenders of this kind, being sharers in the booty, dare not punish their confederates in villainy. Some seem to imagine there is not that malignity in defrauding publick companies, as in cheating private persons ; and indeed, generally speaking, there are not those marks of infamy placed on the first of these offences as on the last. Others fancy, that when crimes are committed jointly with several people, the guilt is divided, and each offender has less to answer for.

VERY

VERY bad reasons or arguments will persuade men to what their affections prompt them ; though the best, and most cogent, are often too weak to induce them to act against their inclinations. If this was not the case, they could not think the crime of cheating one man greater than that of defrauding a thousand ; nor that a rogue is less to be detested for robbing in a gang, than if he robbed singly.

BUT since daily experience shews, that most men scruple not to enrich themselves unjustly at the expence of others, or the publick, whenever they have an opportunity, it is certainly necessary for all honest men, and every good government, to prevent them as much as possible : every honest man should do it in his own defence ; and it is undoubtedly the duty and interest of a good government, to keep the people as secure and easy as may be in the enjoyment of their properties ; nothing contributing more to encrease industry, and render a people easy with a government, and unwilling to suffer a change in it, than security of property.

EVERY man has a right to shew his detestation of such crimes as affect a community, because every one may suffer by them, and,
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in some fort, has a right to punish those who commit them : this punishment is contempt ; which every honest man should shew in the utmost degree, to every villain, however dignified or distinguished. I was much pleased with an honest blunt expression I lately heard from a worthy man : “ We cannot reasonably expect good times (said he) ’till no man, above the degree of a porter, will condescend to drink a bottle of wine with a known rogue, though worth a hundred thousand pounds.” If men of integrity would thus manifest their abhorrence of villains, it would certainly tend to lessen the number of them.

BUT as it is impossible for private men in all cases to preserve themselves against the secret contrivances of rogues, whether single or incorporated, and it is not probable the major part will be wise enough where it is possible ; here we naturally recur to the government for assistance and protection.

IN all good governments, no honest man will be thought too poor to be protected by the laws in the enjoyment of his property ; nor any villain too rich or great, to be punished when he invades the rights of others. The punishment of a late criminal,
who

who was thought vastly rich, did honour to our country. How many rich rogues must tremble to see a man worth a hundred thousand pounds put in the pillory? Such a strict and impartial administration of justice being the only effectual check to that torrent of villainy we are threatened with, every honest man heartily desires it may continue and increase among us.

IN proportion as nations grow wealthy, luxury and extravagance will abound, and consequently greediness after money will increase; but, if a greedy desire of riches is found to influence men so much, as to outweigh all considerations of justice, honour, and humanity, it is absolutely necessary that whips, prisons, hard labour, infamy, halters, and axes be thrown into the other scale.

PERHAPS it will be said, That the endeavours of honest men, and the good laws which may be enacted, or the wholesome severities made use of, will still fall short of preventing all frauds in publick companies. — I believe it — But though this is no good reason against continuing our utmost endeavours to prevent unfair practices in those companies that do subsist, (because these endeavours will be attended with some success)

yet

yet it is a strong argument against setting up more, and against venturing in any without caution.

WHAT I would persuade my countrymen and fellow-citizens to, is, That they should live frugally, act honestly, and apply themselves with industry to trade ; by which means they may gain riches for their families, increase the wealth of the nation, and enjoy the fruits of their labour, with that peace and satisfaction, unknown to men who build their fortunes on the ruin of others ; and who, generally speaking, plunge into the most stupifying vices, that they may prevent or stifle those corroding reflections, which are the natural result of a life spent in rapine and oppression.



T O

Caleb D'Anvers, *Esq;*

So called.

Friend CALEB,

BY this epistle thou mayest perceive, that thy fame hath reached to places in the land, far remote from the great city wherein thou dwellest; and because thy writings are in many things agreeable to truth, they are much read by friends in these parts; but as I apprehend they are, in some particulars, blame-worthy, I shall deal plainly with thee concerning them.

FORASMUCH as thou seemest to plead for freedom of debate, and a liberty of the press, we approve thy so doing, for these appear unto us a means of preserving our liberties, both religious and civil. I am also to inform thee,

thee, that we are much edified by many of thy writings, because they seem to contain both a literal and a figurative sense : this we are the more pleased with, as we conceive it is given unto us to interpret them aright ; and also as the like hath been the practice of friends in many of their writings, ever since we were called to be a people.

As to the errors we apprehend thou committest ; it is apparent that thou dost endeavour to stir up wars and fightings, and blamest those who are of a peaceable and quiet disposition ; herein thou lookest outwards, and seemest too much to depend upon the arm of flesh.

SOME of our friends have had a sight, that the times are coming, and even at hand, wherein those vessels, called men of war, which were formerly so terrible, shall be converted into harmless peaceable ships, and perhaps this is already in part accomplished. But whether the enemy may not take advantage hereof to hurt or destroy the commerce of this nation, I own myself in much doubt. Oh, *Caleb* ! I must here confess, that my bowels, and the bowels of many of our friends, yern after trade ; for without that, we can enjoy but few of the good things of this

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world ;

world; and whom thinkest thou that the good things of the world are intended for, but the faithful remnant?

MOREOVER, friends think the peaceable and quiet temper, so manifest in men of high stations, to be of GREAT PRICE, and do believe, that these are the times, in which many ancient prophecies shall be fulfilled. Manifest it is, that our nation of late hath hardly lifted up the sword; and many instances could I give, that the inhabitants thereof have not for some time learned any more the art of war. I tell thee, *Caleb*, we believe these are the times long since foretold, in which kings shall be nursing fathers; which surely is much better than delighting in war, and being men of blood.

OH, *Caleb*! if thou wert as conversant in sacred writ, as thou seemest to be in profane writings, thou wouldst know, that the great men, thou complaineest of, do well in giving any man, who asks for their coats, their cloaks also; and a rumour hath reached our ears, that they are about so to do: but mistake me not here, for I mean not literally the CLOAKS, with which they cover themselves; no, these are too necessary to them. Here thou hast occasion for thy
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spiritual spectacles. He that can read, let him read.

WHAT remains? but to assure thee, that my desires, and the breathings of friends are, that the eyes of thy inward man may be enlightened, and that thou mayest become more and more serviceable in thy generation. Farewel.

Hezekiah Friendliman.

From *Beverley in Yorkshire*,
(the place of my outward
habitation) the 11th day
of the first month called
March, in the year 1728.



OF
FANTASTICAL DRESSES;
Especially of the
L A D I E S.

——— *Hæ nugæ seria ducunt*
In mala. ———

HOR.

THERE are numbers of good well-meaning people, who think it a matter of no concern or moment what habits are worn, or what fashions for cloaths prevail among our gentry; but a very judicious friend of mine is of a contrary opinion. He says, that he hardly ever knew any person affect singularity or oddness of habit, who had not a wrong turn in his head: he instances an old acquaintance, remarkable for a double cravat curiously plaited, and a perriwig of an uncommon size, who some years since turned

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French prophet ; another, who was very fond of wearing three buttons on his hat, who, at seventy years of age, married his maid of eighteen ; a third he mentions, that always wore shoe-strings, who drowned himself for love of a widow. My friend carries the point so far as to say, that he has traced by this means the beginning of discomposure in several of the present inhabitants of *Bedlam* ; and that, about seventy or eighty years ago, when great part of the nation went mad about religion, one of the first symptoms, which appeared, was the affectation of very odd and uncouth dresses.

IF my friend's observations are just, what danger are numbers of our ladies in, who affect such hermaphroditical riding-habits ? And many of our young gentlemen, who frequently walk the park and streets with huge clubs, almost as tall as themselves, and in dresses which render it very difficult to distinguish a man of quality from a footman ? But there is one more observation of my friend's, which I must not omit. Though many people seem very desirous of a war, he heartily wishes we may continue in peace, and for this reason, particularly :—So many of our young fellows assume a military air, and affect

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to

* This essay was written in the year 1731, when that custom prevailed.

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to look so terrible, that he is very apprehensive, if their valour should be put to the trial, it will be found wanting. For, says he, an affected appearance of bravery, is generally but a cloak to cowardice.——Thus far my friend's observations and opinions; which I shall leave every one to form a judgment of, as he is persuaded in himself. My concern is principally for my fair country-women, that they may not disguise their pretty faces, nor render their lovely persons disagreeable.

RIDING on horseback is an exercise very beneficial for the ladies on many accounts, and it puts them in an attitude by which a well-shaped woman appears to great advantage: the waistcoat and petticoat are a convenient and becoming habit for riding; but I mean the feminine waistcoat, not the masculine. When *Thalestris* is in her riding-habit, it is not easy to know her from a very pretty fellow. I lately saw this lady in a publick place at a gaming-table, in a circle of men playing at hazard, and did not for a considerable time distinguish her from the beaus she was surrounded by: her person is of the tallest size of women, her shape by no means exact, her complexion none of the fairest, nor features any of the softest; her hair was in a very soldierly manner turned up and fastened under her hat, which was of the

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fort I think they call a whimsey, with a cockade of black ribbon near the button: she had on a jacket exactly resembling a man's coat, and frequently sat without any thing on her head. I could not forbear thinking this lady in a very odd situation; it was easy for a stranger to take her for a man, as I did at first; and indeed, without looking below the waist, to see the petticoat, there was no possibility to distinguish her from one. Now, as I am not so uncharitable to think this lady had entirely put off female modesty with the female habit; and as all restraint of behaviour on her account was prevented in those who did not know her to be a woman, as I observed several did not, how many shocking things must she meet with? Oaths and curses are almost as common with many gamesters as ill-luck; and other discourse, in the utmost degree grating to a modest lady, is but too frequent; all which, it may be presumed, the presence of a woman of fashion and character, if she appeared in her proper person, would prevent.

I HOPE the ladies will excuse me, if I say the principal thing they aim at in dress is to render themselves agreeable to men; but they must have very odd opinions of the men, to think they can be most acceptable to them, when

they most resemble the male sex : if such a preposterous taste should ever prevail among us, it ought to give terrible apprehensions to the ladies, and I am sure would greatly alarm all virtuous men. But as I don't know a better method of judging in any matter, than making the case our own, I would beg of the ladies to ask themselves, how they should like a young fellow in a suit of pinners, a pair of stays, and a mantua? And whether there would not be something very shocking in such a one making love to them? If men would be thus disgusting to the ladies in the habits of women, and justly become the objects of their scorn and contempt, how little agreeable must the ladies appear to the men in such masculine dresses? Certainly each of the sexes depart from their own true characters, and become less agreeable, in proportion as they assume the habits and behaviour of the other. A masculine air and assurance is altogether as forbidding in a woman, as a languishing, soft, and effeminate carriage in a man.

As it is very evident that the habits we wear have a considerable influence on our behaviour, I am the more concerned for the ladies on that account : if any doubt this, let them observe how much more value a country

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try girl sets on herself when drest in her *Sunday's* habit, with a suit of cherry-coloured ribbons, than when she is in her every-day's cloaths, and her cap tied only with a piece of bobbin? What a superior air to all his former companions, a country-fellow assumes, when he is first listd for a soldier, and has got on his laced hat, and regimental cloaths? How diffident and sneaking a poor poet appears in a shabby thread-bare coat? How self-sufficient and daring a powdered beau in an embroidered suit? Since it is certain then that our cloaths have great influence on our minds and behaviour, I cannot but be very apprehensive, that the masculine habits, the ladies so much affect, will give them a bold and masculine behaviour. Indeed I have lately seen several of them on the road, that seemed determined to dispute the way with men who have met them, and not known their sex. I was lately in full expectation of seeing a real pretty fellow thrown off his horse, by one of these *Amazons*: he mistook her for a man, and seemed determined to have the road; she as fully resolved to turn him out; but *Pallas* appearing to the young fellow in the shape of a petticoat, prevented further mischief, and my young gentleman spurred his horse out of the road, with a "madam, I beg ten thousand pardons." In
this

this case, it is true, the advantage seemed entirely on the lady's side, therefore there was the less danger; but the ladies should remember, they may sometimes be over-matched, and get ugly falls.

My friend *Tom Truelove* has made his addresses for some time to a young lady who received him very favourably, and as the fortune and settlement are agreed upon, the relations admire they are not married; and I believe the young lady herself thinks *Tom* somewhat backward: the truth is, she has lately got one of these *Amazonian* habits, which makes my friend uneasy; he is an admirer of mildness and complacency in a mistress, or a wife; he thinks, as we have before hinted, that all approaches towards roughness or manliness in a woman, as disagreeable as softness and effeminacy in a man. And as *Tom* knows the world, and the sex well, he is apprehensive that when a woman has got all but the breeches, she may struggle hard for them too. *Tom* cannot himself well acquaint his mistress with these fears and apprehensions, but as I am very intimate in the family, and think in my conscience *Florella* will make a good wife, notwithstanding this ill appearance, I am resolved to expostulate the matter with her, and try if she will

will not sacrifice this disagreeable dress for an agreeable husband.

ALTHOUGH I am in hopes we shall prevent the intire metamorphoses of this lady, and get her married, yet I am very apprehensive the generality of our *Epicenes* will proceed from one step to another, 'till they become perfect men in all outward appearance. I have observed several of them who for some time have cast a longing eye on the breeches, but as it would look somewhat oddly to jump at once out of their petticoats into breeches, I would humbly propose, that for one season, at least, they content themselves with trowsers, which will be very convenient in many respects, and particularly so to those who have not handsome legs; for the trowsers may be made to reach the ankle. Undoubtedly, certain precautions of this nature are absolutely necessary in ladies dresses: if proper care had been taken some years since, to have prevented the fashion of their appearing naked within a few inches of the waist, so many would not have discovered such sad-coloured necks and breasts to publick view; and a proper caution, at this time, may save many from so notoriously exposing such very ill shapes: for I think myself obliged to acquaint the ladies, that these fashions, and
some

some others, have been maliciously contrived by the fair and well-shaped, to expose the defects of others less happy in those respects. But to return to the matter before us: during the time our ladies are in their trowsers, they may learn several qualifications very proper for the part they are to act. Gaming they are already sufficiently versed in; but it will be absolutely necessary for them to learn fencing; for, when there are no outward or visible signs left of their sex, they may, on many occasions, be liable to challenges, (for with the breeches they must put on swords;) now, if they have not learned to fence, the young fellows will soon get within their points, and be through them in an instant. But when to the knowledge of gaming the ladies have added fencing, swearing, and talking—I shall own they are fit for the breeches, and think them as well qualified as most of the modern fine gentlemen about town.



A

L E T T E R

From *E. P.*

THE following letter was sent by a young woman, whose father was a clergyman, to a lady in the country her intimate friend: the clergyman had given his children, and this daughter in particular, a very good education; but, notwithstanding the living he enjoyed was considerable, he left little or nothing for his family to subsist on after his decease: this obliged poor *Betty*, though one of the genteelest persons in the parish, to become a servant. We shall make no apology for publishing her letter, because we think it contains several judicious and useful remarks.

“ *MADAM,*

“ *SINCE* you are pleased, by the very
 “ affectionate letter I received from you,
 “ to

“ to make so particular and kind an inquiry
“ in what manner I have lived since my fa-
“ ther died, and you went with your spouse
“ to *Ireland*, I should be guilty of unpardon-
“ able negligence, or ingratitude, not to in-
“ form you ; but, that my letter may give
“ you more entertainment than any thing
“ relating merely to myself can afford, I
“ shall take the liberty to add a few obser-
“ vations on more considerable persons, whose
“ families I have lived in.

“ WHEN my father died, and it was
“ known to the neighbourhood that we were
“ left destitute, an elderly gentleman and his
“ wife, who lived a few miles from us, in-
“ vited me to pass some time at their house.
“ This ancient couple lived very happily upon
“ a small estate, but large enough for their
“ necessities, and therefore equal to their de-
“ fires : they had passed forty years together
“ with very little variety ; their pleasures were
“ confined to a very narrow circle, but their
“ cares and fears in a much narrower : In a
“ word, they lived according to nature, and
“ were therefore happy. I often wished for
“ such an easy contented state of mind as
“ they were blessed with, and if I had
“ continued longer with them, perhaps might
“ in part have attained it ; but their deaths

“ soon

“ soon closed this quiet scene, which was
“ succeeded by a very busy one to me; for
“ I then went to *London*, and sought for a
“ service.

“ THE first place that offered to my liking
“ was a merchant's in the city, where I was
“ hired to wait on his wife: the splendor
“ this family lived in, made me think I was
“ well provided for, and that my master was
“ very rich; he kept a coach and chariot,
“ a valet de chambre, two coachmen, three
“ footmen, a housekeeper, cook, and house-
“ maid, a servant for every child, which
“ were four, and myself, who only waited
“ on my mistress: we had also a country-
“ house, where was constantly a gardener,
“ and one woman-servant. The furniture of
“ both houses was showey and costly, but
“ not neat or elegant. We had many visi-
“ tors, to whom my mistress took great plea-
“ sure to shew her fine house and cloaths:
“ the latter she had indeed some cause to be
“ vain of; for, including her jewels, they
“ could not be worth less than a thousand
“ pounds. My master was little at home,
“ which I imputed to a multiplicity of affairs
“ he had abroad; many people came to in-
“ quire after him, whose business I supposed
“ was chiefly to ask his custom, for he was
“ a great

“ a great trader ; but I thought it was some-
“ what remarkable, that he was often denied,
“ when I knew him to be in the house : this
“ the other servants told me was common
“ among great people ; and, indeed, such I
“ supposed my master and mistress to be, for
“ they endeavoured in every thing to imitate
“ the quality, and lived at a greater expence
“ than any of our country gentlemen, who
“ have two thousand pounds a year, can
“ afford. But, before I had lived six months
“ in the family, I was undeceived in my opi-
“ nion of this gentleman’s circumstances ; for
“ some officers with an extent (I think they
“ called it) came one day into the house,
“ whilst my mistress had eight or ten visitors
“ in the dining-room, before whom she had
“ displayed all her finery ; this put a me-
“ lancholy end to their grandeur. I had
“ almost forgot to tell you, that, during the
“ time I lived in this family, my mistress
“ never went into the kitchen, or threaded
“ a needle ; but she now lives in one room,
“ and sells a little tea, coffee, and such things
“ for a subsistence, and my master is gone
“ abroad in a post that may bring him in fifty
“ pounds a year.

“ THE next service I went to was a ba-
“ ronet’s, near *St. James’s*, who lived (as I
“ think

“ think almost every one here does) in a very
 “ expensive manner: the housekeeper, who
 “ is a talkative woman, and had been several
 “ years in the family, informed me that this
 “ gentleman had an estate of fifteen hundred
 “ pounds a year in *Kent*, which he lived very
 “ well upon, till about five years since he
 “ was drawn into play by sharpers, who won
 “ of him large sums of money; ever since,
 “ he has lived in *London* at a great expence,
 “ expecting a place: I doubt this will make
 “ bad worse; but, as my master thinks he
 “ has been several times near succeeding, he
 “ is still very sanguine: indeed, if faith was
 “ as effectual in removing obstacles to the
 “ obtaining of places, as it is to subdue diffi-
 “ culties of another nature, this gentleman
 “ has enough to remove mountains.

“ WHEN I came first into this family, I
 “ thought my master was a very learned man,
 “ and my lady much given to reading; for
 “ he had a large fine library, and she a closet
 “ of choice books curiously bound, gilt, and
 “ lettered; but I soon found my master never
 “ went into the library but to shew it to com-
 “ pany, and my lady’s books were rarely taken
 “ out of the case but to be dusted. I could
 “ not imagine for what reason people, who
 “ did not read, should put themselves to the
 S “ expence

“ expence of buying such a number of books,
“ and fitting up a library, till I was informed
“ that a study is as necessary in a nobleman’s
“ or gentleman’s house, although he does not
“ read, as a chapel though he never hears
“ prayers ; and that books, in a lady’s closet,
“ are esteemed as ornamental furniture as
“ china upon cabinets, and that there is no
“ more necessity one should be read than the
“ other used.

“ My master and mistress were not di-
“ verted from reading by the care of their
“ family, or any other care, for all the ser-
“ vants did what was right in their own eyes ;
“ this it was to no purpose to complain of.
“ My master was very jovial and unthinking ;
“ my mistress indolent and much troubled
“ with vapours. This gentleman married his
“ lady for love, when they were both very
“ young ; he saw her at the play, was deeply
“ smitten, and being much superior in for-
“ tune, the match was soon agreed on, even
“ before he had opportunity of acquainting
“ himself with her temper or disposition :
“ when they came together, he soon disliked
“ her humour, which in a little time wore
“ off all fondness for her person ; the neglect
“ that followed, her own indolent way of
“ life, or both, raised in apprehension, at
“ least,

" least, many illnesses: but whether these
 " were real, or imaginary, they were attended
 " by certain and substantial charges; doctors
 " and apothecaries being in constant attend-
 " ance. I often thought, if this lady would
 " employ some time in the care of her family,
 " she might soon receive more benefit from
 " that and exercise, than by medicines; and,
 " perhaps, gain a cheerfulness of temper
 " which would render her much more agree-
 " able both to herself and her husband; but
 " so far is she from taking any care of the
 " family, that she takes none of her children.
 " She never suckled any for fear of spoiling
 " her shape; and thinks the management of
 " them, or the taking any part in their edu-
 " cation, much below her quality: she will
 " indeed sometimes send to the nursery for
 " one of them to play with, as she does for
 " the parrot or monkey, but all care is en-
 " tirely left to the servants; and, as they are
 " the only persons with whom the children
 " converse, their behaviour, as well as the
 " words and phrases they use, are the most
 " vulgar you can imagine: of the footmen
 " and maid-servants, the children learn to
 " romp and express themselves indecently;
 " of the housekeeper to use hard words, ill-
 " pronounced, and improperly applied. I
 " observed master *Billy*, who is about four

“ years old, to be excessively passionate, which
 “ disposition he could not take from his fa-
 “ ther or mother; but, as the nurse who
 “ suckled him was a violent termagant, this
 “ temper is easily accounted for. You, ma-
 “ dam, who not only suckled so many fine
 “ children, but took such care in their edu-
 “ cation, have reason to hope you shall find
 “ no ill qualities in them, or at least you will
 “ have none to answer for.

“ I ASK pardon for this digression, and shall
 “ now proceed to acquaint you, that the ir-
 “ regular hours we kept in this family, and
 “ the other disorders of it, put me upon look-
 “ ing out for another place: one offered in
 “ the city, which I accepted, and am now
 “ in. My master is a merchant, and I be-
 “ lieve very wealthy; he has been married
 “ about twelve years, and has several children.
 “ This family is the reverse of those I have
 “ hitherto lived in: every thing is well re-
 “ gulated; here is care without affectation,
 “ frugality without niggardliness, and plenty
 “ without profusion: the house is convenient,
 “ though not very large, elegantly rather than
 “ richly furnished: servants are kept for use,
 “ not ostentation; those who have been found
 “ dishonest are immediately dismissed, and
 “ such a character given of them as they
 “ deserve:

“deserve: in other misdemeanors, the re-
“proof or punishment is always proportioned
“to the fault. I have often, with pleasure,
“observed, that when a servant is found strict-
“ly just, or very good-natured, though they
“have some considerable failings, there is
“great mildness used towards them; the
“good qualities are endeavoured to be im-
“proved, and the person reclaimed from the
“bad. In a word, to be acceptable in this
“family, it is only necessary to be honest, and
“endeavour to please. The amiable exam-
“ple of my master and mistress are not less
“conducive to the good order of this family,
“than their care and management; they are
“both persons of excellent sense and agree-
“able tempers, which qualities not only tend
“to make themselves happy, but excite a
“desire of imitation in others, and diffuse
“pleasure all around them.

“My master, though considerably em-
“ployed in business, instructs his children at
“leisure hours, in several parts of learning;
“he has taught both boys and girls, who are
“old enough, to read with a just and true
“pronunciation and accent; the children
“have also learned of their father, and of
“one another, to speak *French*. My mistress
“teaches her daughters needlework, and se-

“veral accomplishments proper for the sex :
“these, and other parts of education, are
“made the childrens diversion, and have
“never cost them a tear. I have often heard
“this gentleman say, he thinks the common
“methods of teaching youth very cruel, and
“more likely to make fools and blockheads,
“than men of sense and scholars ; that those
“under his direction shall not have their
“tempers soured, or spirits broken by seve-
“rity : he is of opinion, that it is barbarous
“to deprive children of those pleasures youth
“affords ; and which, if not interrupted by
“the severity of parents and tutors, are per-
“haps the most unmixed of any enjoyed in
“life. I pretend not to judge how practi-
“cable this method may be with all tempers,
“but in our family the good effects of it are
“apparent : the childrens love to their parents,
“not only occasions an unwillingness to of-
“fend, but excites a strong inclination to imi-
“tate them.

“THIS gentleman and his wife have un-
“doubtedly a sincere love for each other :
“he is delighted with her humour, and is
“very fond of her person. She has a high
“opinion of his understanding ; by this means
“she never contests things of consequence,
“he never insists on trifles ; she does not
“desire

“ desire what is beyond his circumstances, he
“ will not refuse her what is suitable to them.
“ If my master is out late with his friends,
“ which is not very common, he meets with
“ no kind or unkind expostulations when he
“ comes home: if my mistress is gone to
“ rest, he goes to another apartment. This
“ lodging separately is frequent on these and
“ other occasions, and proceeds only from
“ complaisance: when he is minded to go
“ a journey, on business or pleasure, no dif-
“ like is shewn, though I know his com-
“ pany is so agreeable to her, that she wishes
“ he would not go so often: but, perhaps,
“ in this, he judges best what is proper to
“ support their love to each other; for, upon
“ his return after a considerable absence, I
“ have observed their affection to appear with
“ additional ardour. When my master has
“ visitors, who are generally men of excellent
“ sense, my mistress receives them with great
“ civility; by which I observe she lays no
“ small obligation on her husband, who for
“ his part omits no opportunity of saying the
“ civilist things, and behaving in the most
“ obliging manner imaginable; but this never
“ betrays them into indecent familiarities or
“ fondnesses before company. I shall men-
“ tion but one circumstance more relating to
“ this happy couple, in which they are the
S 4 “ very

“ very reverse of all other married persons I
 “ have lived with ; they are more scrupulous
 “ of being seen dirty by each other, than by
 “ strangers. I have heard the footman say,
 “ that when my master comes off a journey,
 “ he is generally shaved and changes his
 “ linnen before he comes home ; and, if my
 “ mistress knows the time of his return, she
 “ is as clean, if not as fine, as a bride.

“ You will believe, madam, that in this
 “ family I am very easy ; for as I have the
 “ good fortune to give entire satisfaction, my
 “ master and mistress are very kind to

“ Your most obedient humble servant,

“ May 13, 1730.

“ E. P.”



O F

I D L E N E S S.

Written in the Year 1730.

Is mihi demum vivere & frui animâ videtur, qui aliquo negotio intentus, præclari facinoris aut artis bonæ famam quærit.

SAL.

IDLENESS has at present so much influence on abundance of the younger sort of our gentry, and is become so fashionable, that the principal emulation among a great part of them is only who shall be most foppish and insignificant. Nevertheless, if this disposition was confined to such who are born to great estates, and therefore claim a prerogative of being useless, it would less deserve our notice. But the infection having reached to those in lower life, who have no such title to insignificance, we think it high time it should be animadverted

animadverted on, and some inquiry made from whence it proceeds. If we trace this ill-habit to its origin, we shall find it is often owing more to a wrong education, and bad examples, than to the inclinations of the persons who are guilty of it.

MANY men, who from low beginnings have raised themselves to circumstances above what they expected, having found the disadvantage of being wholly illiterate, resolved to prevent that inconvenience in their children; and there is no doubt but this care, under proper regulations, and rightly directed, is very necessary and useful: but when it proceeds so far as to keep lads many years at their books, who have no genius, it only makes idle pedantick drones of those, who, if they had been brought up to trade, or some mechanick business, might have been industrious useful members of the commonwealth.

MEN brought up only to learning, are generally unfit for trade, and very apt to despise all laborious employments. It is certain therefore, that none ought to be educated wholly to literature, but such whose early abilities promise great proficiency in learning; or those who by birth are entitled to such estates, as put them above the necessity of industry

industry to get a livelihood. If this rule was observed, we should not see such swarms of young clergymen unprovided for, nor such numbers of doctors and lawyers almost ready to starve. Nevertheless, so preposterous are we in the education of our children, that many bright and excellent geniuses are entirely uncultivated, whilst there is much labour bestowed on barren and unfruitful minds: many, who are only fit for bodily labour, are obliged to torture their brains, in order to produce what never existed in them; and others, of excellent capacities, are condemned to drudge on in business they are no ways fit for, and therefore will never succeed in.

BUT if some tradesmen, and others of low degree, have mistaken the true interest and capacities of their children in bringing them up to be scholars, it is very certain that numbers of our nobility and gentry have taken great care not to burden their children with learning; whoever converses with many of these, will easily perceive the truth of this assertion.

THE present prevailing humour of putting youth to no trades or business, helps to stock the nation with so many idle useless persons.

Undoubtedly

Undoubtedly this proceeds partly from a strong inclination, in the meaner people, to raise their children to something like gentry; and, in the gentry, to a dislike that any of their descendants should become merchants or tradesmen: to obtain the one, and avoid the other, both are seeking after genteel employments, as they are called, for their children. This considerably increases the number of dependents on a court and ministry, oftentimes occasions great disappointments and vexations to particular persons, and is highly injurious to the publick.

HAVING lately observed that my barber had a son of seventeen years of age who was not put apprentice, nor at all concerned himself with his father's business, but wore a laced hat, and fauntered about; I enquired of the father what trade he intended his son for? The answer was, that *Jacky* spoke *French*, and had learned to dance, therefore was fit for better employment than trade; and as he (the father) made perriwigs for several members of parliament, and great men; he did not doubt but he should procure *Jacky* a place in which he might live like a gentleman. Now, if my barber, after six or seven years expectation of this place, should be disappointed, which I think a hundred to one but
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he will, what can his son be able to do, without money to maintain him, (which I know the father is not able to give) or the knowledge of any trade or business? I do not see any thing he will have to depend on but his *French* and dancing, which will hardly procure him a better place than that of a footman; but, if he is wise enough to learn in time the art of shaving and buckling a perriwig, he may be promoted to the office of a valet-de-chambre.

SQUIRE *Mortgage* of *Essex*, who is possessed of about four hundred pounds a year, which he has sufficiently encumbered, has three sons and two daughters. The eldest son must be a gentleman of course, being born so; and to qualify him for the care of his estate, and the service of his country, he has been taught to drink *October* and hunt foxes; in which last exercise he is so great a proficient, and has had such wonderful success, that one end of the great barn is hung full of the skins of those animals, the trophies of his noble exploits. The other two sons are put to school, where the youngest, though utterly void of genius, may, by the help of a good memory, become a scholar, and will therefore be fit for a divine; the other is very averse to books, but of so covetous and thrifty a disposition, that,

that, in all probability, he would make a successful tradesman; but that the father will not hear of, because there has not been one tradesman in the family since his great grandfather, who was a woollen-draper, and got the estate they now enjoy, which indeed was three times larger before it had passed through the hands of the gentlemen his successors. Miss *Charlotte*, the eldest daughter, who is very pretty, and has been taught every useless qualification of her sex, had lately an advantageous offer; but it was from a merchant and a citty, which was thought reason enough to reject it with scorn. This ill treatment of merchants and tradesmen, by those who are in all respects their inferiors, may possibly be considered another time.

BUT to return to our subject; the wrong education of some of our youth, and the total want of it in others, is undoubtedly the source of many evils in this age, as well as that bad habit we now complain of; and indeed idleness itself is productive of many ill consequences. The *Lacedemonians*, to deter their children from drunkenness, frequently made slaves drunk, and then caused them to appear before their children, that the ridiculous and disagreeable figures the slaves made might beget an abhorrence of that vice in the youth.

In

In like manner, I should think, if young gentlemen would observe the insipid, tiresome, disagreeable behaviour of the idle, they would want no other preservative against so irksome a life. They aim at ease, but cannot attain it; their minds continually roving from scene to scene: they endeavour at pleasure, but no wonder they miss it, when they know not in what true pleasure consists, nor where it is to be found. Go but to the coffee-houses from a little within *Temple-Bar* to *St. James's*, what swarms of idle, lazy, able-bodied young men, with vacant faces, are to be seen in those asylums of indolence? You may observe one walking before a large glass, viewing his dear person and dress, from his tupee to the harness buckles upon his shoes, and practising affected motions and gestures, 'till he becomes finished in studied fopperies; another yawning, stretching, rubbing his heavy eyes, and often enquiring if it is five o'clock, that he may move off to the play, and find something to divert him.

I HAVE prevailed on one of these young sparks to keep an exact account how he spent his time for a few days, which I shall give the publick in his own words.

THURSDAY. Got up at eleven and drank
tea,

tea, read the *Atalantis* for half an hour, finished dressing by two, went to the coffee-house, from thence to dinner; at four to the coffee-house again: nothing remarkable but three or four men talking of virtue, vice, sincerity, the beauty of it, and such stuff: they seemed to be queer fellows, both by their discourse and habits, for they wore small shoe-buckles and tye-wigs. At five went to the play, forgot what they called it, but it was one of *Rowe's* tragedies, and damn'd silly stuff: after the play went to the tavern with *Jack Saunter*, *Tom Tipler*, and *Will Sly*. About twelve we had toasted all the healths we could think on, then grew dull; but *Jack Saunter* beginning to sing, made us merry; drank bumpers 'till one. *Will Sly* called for the box and dice; I did not care for the trouble of play; besides, I never have any luck; however, to please him, I played off five pieces. Went to my lodgings at two.

FRIDAY. Rose at twelve, could eat nothing, but drank one dish of green tea; sent my footman to buy a new poudrier and two large black silk bags with wide wings and ribbons, one for myself and the other for him; fitted on my new bag, which gave me a military air, and very much improved my manner:

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ner: went to the coffee-house, met *Will. Sly*, who offered me my revenge. Memorandum, *Nick Modish's* buckles bigger and handsomer than mine. Drank some usquebaugh to get me an appetite, dined at the *Rose*, eat heartily, sent word to my lodgings that I should not lie at home; went to Mrs. S-----.

SATURDAY. Did not get up 'till one. Went to my lodgings damnably hipt, read *Martin* upon the P---. To divert myself bought a new sword-knot, and changed my buckles for a pair larger than *Nick Modish's*. In the evening saw a play, and afterwards ended the night with our usual company.

I COULD not prevail on my young spark, who pleaded the irksomeness of so much writing, to proceed in his diary; and indeed was not very urgent, when he assured me, that I should find very little variety if he was to go on for twelve months; these three days being an epitome of his whole life.

If parents, and others who are intrusted with the education of children, would seriously consider what effects education has upon them, both in respect to their own happiness, and the good of the publick, this might excite a care in the guardians of our youth, to

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observe

observe the genius and inclination of those under their tuition, and the circumstances they are like to set out in the world with : for youth should be taught what may be useful to them in manhood, and be so nurtured in industry and suitable employments, that they need not become dependents on others, but be able to provide for themselves, and be also serviceable to the publick.

AND if young gentlemen, who are their own directors, would make trial, how much more pleasure, as well as other solid advantage, is to be attained by the grateful vicissitude of business and leisure, than by a life of idleness, they would, I am persuaded, soon change the latter for the former ; and instead of passing away their time in a circle of trifling, insignificant, and sometimes vicious actions, would become diligent and industrious ; by which means they may grow agreeable to themselves, beneficial to others, and of importance to their country.

T O

T O

Caleb D'Anvers, *Esq*;

S I R,

Paris, Aug. 15, N. S. 1737.

HAVING now almost compleated what is commonly called the grand tour of *France*, I know you will expect to hear from me; but you will not expect to be entertained with a particular account of this kingdom, which is so fully described in many books, and so well known to such numbers of our countrymen. I shall therefore only observe, that a traveller, who imagines he shall see in *France* a great many fine, regular, well-built, neat cities and towns, such as are to be met with in *Holland*, *Flanders*, and some parts of *Italy*, will find himself much disappointed. Indeed, if the *French* voyage-writers are to be believed, there are no finer cities and towns in any part of *Europe*. One is extremely neat, another extremely regular, the third vastly magnificent: but they generally omit

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extremely

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extremely nasty, which is a character that much more justly belongs to most of them than those epithets they so freely make use of. These writers have, for the most part, given us rather panegyricks than descriptions of their cities and towns. It is true, the country of *France* is, in many parts, very fertile and delightful; the air, especially in the southern provinces, pure and wholesome, and the towns and cities are often finely situated, but rarely well-built, and more rarely kept in any tolerable degree of neatness.

I COULD not well avoid these general remarks on the towns and cities of *France*, and the descriptions you will meet with of them in most books; but my present design in writing to you is of another nature. However defective *France* may be with respect to neatness and elegance in the cities and towns, it appears to me the most thriving nation in *Europe*. From the poor miserable condition, in which it was about four and twenty years since, (when I resided in it for some time) its treasures exhausted, its trade decayed, the number of people greatly lessened, and the marks of extreme poverty appearing almost every where; from this poor miserable condition, the country is now become full of inhabitants, trade is exceedingly flourishing, a

face

face of plenty appears in the most considerable places, the publick treasury was never better managed, nor ever abounded more with money. This great, and almost sudden change of affairs in *France*, has not been brought about only by the natural advantages that kingdom enjoys, (which I confess are very considerable) but also by the great care taken to encourage all beneficial branches of trade; amongst which, such as interfere with the interest of their once powerful neighbours, are most carefully cultivated.

FRANCE has at present a minister at the head of her affairs, who knows that a country destitute of mines cannot grow rich but by foreign trade. He has, undoubtedly, taken notice by what means *England* and *Holland* are become so wealthy, and were enabled, not many years since, to humble the grand monarch of *France*; and, having observed these advantages attending foreign commerce, he uses the most proper methods to extend and increase that of *France* to the utmost. This is laying a solid foundation of power and greatness.

THE *French* are very sensible of the advantages they enjoy under the present administration; they find they grow rich, and feel them-

selves as happy as a people can well be in an absolute monarchy. The present prime minister is frequently the subject of their conversation, and almost as frequently of their encomiums; the character they give of him is, that, with regard to his own private affairs, he is entirely disinterested; he neither heaps up riches himself, nor will knowingly suffer others to do it unjustly, at the publick expence: in employments of state, he does not prefer his relations, or immediate dependents, because they are such; but chuses men only for their integrity and capacity: he looks upon himself as the servant of the publick, and, notwithstanding his great age, applies with much assiduity to publick affairs, setting some hours aside, three days in a week particularly, to attend and examine proposals made to him for the benefit of trade; he consults the advantage of his country in every thing, and well-knowing that if a people are not secure in all legal methods of carrying on their traffick, and defended against any power, who dares to interrupt or attack them, they will despise their governors, and be greatly discouraged in their trade; he takes especial care to protect the subjects of *France* against all insults from any foreign power whatever. You do not hear of any *Frenchmen* ill used or insulted in foreign countries, nor any of
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their ships being taken and confiscated, or stopped and plundered by nations pretending to be at peace with them, but a prompt and ample satisfaction is immediately insisted on and obtained. This protection and security of person and property, enjoyed by the *French* in so high a degree, creates in them a great opinion both of their governors and themselves, and causes them to look with the utmost contempt on any people, who suffer themselves to be insulted, plundered, and ill-used by those with whom they are not at war.

WHEN I observed what esteem the cardinal had gained, and heard such praises and blessings bestowed upon him for his mild, prudent, and disinterested administration of affairs, I could not help reflecting, how greatly the pleasure, resulting from a consciousness of doing so much good, transcends that of accumulating wealth or power. This unfashionable taste, will, doubtless, be heartily despised by many ministers of state, and others, who think riches and power the most substantial enjoyments, and that all the rest is mere chimæra and fancy.

BUT to return to my subject. These people are of opinion that there is a national as

well as perſonal reputation, and that it behoves the publick to be as careful of the one, as a private man ſhould be of the other. In this I doubt not but you agree with them; for, if a nation once ſuffers any foreign power to inſult them with impunity, they will ſoon find others do the ſame, and, in a little time, both their trade and poſſeſſions will become entirely precarious.

IT is reported here, that a certain nation^d, which, not many years ſince, we heartily deſpiſed, and beat very ſoundly in another's quarrel, does not only continue to do us all manner of injuries, but demands whole provinces, to which they have no manner of right. I hope, on this occaſion, we ſhall behave as we ought to do.

OUR countrymen are great admirers of the *French*, in many reſpects, and very apt to imitate them in their ridiculous faſhions and cuſtoms. I heartily wiſh we were as ready to learn from them what is truly valuable and praiſe-worthy. Pray, how do you think the *French* would behave to any nation who inſulted their ſubjects; uſed them with the utmoſt contempt and cruelty, made prize of their ſhips, and demanded provinces from them, to which they had no right? I ſuppoſe
you

^d *Spain.*

you will answer, there is a great difference between the *French* and us. Is there so? This is a cutting reflection to an *Englishman*, especially one who remembers the circumstances of the two nations six and twenty years ago. We have indeed a debt of many millions, which lies heavy upon us. If this utterly disables us from defending ourselves, our dominions, and properties, (which I hope is not the case) what thanks do we owe to those, who have taken no care to pay off any considerable part of this debt during five and twenty years peace?

IN a conversation I had with some *French* gentlemen at this place, who highly extolled the happiness of their present administration, I ventured (knowing my company) to say, that *France* was indebted to a single person for this happiness, which must be very precarious as it depended upon the life of one man, and he so far in years; whereas the constitution of our country, in a great measure, secured the publick happiness, and made it lasting. I added, that if a future minister of *France* should prove ever so corrupt, or pursue measures directly opposite to the publick interest, they had no parliament that could call him to account; and that, where the whole depended on the will of a prince,
there

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there could be no security for the people. The company, being men of sense, allowed part of what I advanced, to be true; but, at the same time, desired me to compare the figure that——makes at present, both in foreign negotiations and other respects, with that which *France* makes; and, as to a minister, who might be corrupt, or pursued measures destructive to his country, being called to account by p-----, they desired me to take a view * * * * *

* * * * *
These observations were so just, that I could only acknowledge the truth of them, and declare my hopes of better times.

As I know, sir, you are a true lover of your country, solicitous for its safety, and in a station to do service for the publick, I thought myself obliged to observe to you, how rich and powerful our formidable neighbours are become; with what wisdom and spirit their publick affairs are conducted, and what opinion they entertain of us. Suffer me to add, that, notwithstanding the present pacifick appearance the *French* affect to put on, we have, in my apprehension, every thing to fear from their circumstances, and our own.

I am, &c.

A

L E T T E R

To the Same.

S I R,

July 2, 1739.

HOWEVER some of the following observations and characters may differ from those you have heretofore published, yet, from your known candour, I doubt not but you will give them a place in your paper.

THE prosperity or adversity, the happiness or misery of nations, have, in all ages, very much depended upon the predominant inclinations or passions, as well as upon the prudent conduct, of the people; but more especially of the leading men or rulers among them. Whoever is at all acquainted with history will be satisfied of the truth of this assertion.

W H E N

WHEN an ambitious spirit, and a desire of making unjust conquests, have possessed a prince or people, then violent measures and cruel wars, which have often proved pernicious to the conquerors, as well as destructive to the conquered, have been entered into----- When a sordid spirit of avarice, or when profusion and voluptuousness have prevailed, then integrity hath generally been at a very low ebb; feeble councils have been pursued, and a most scandalous disregard to what concerned the publick has been the consequence----But when men have esteemed no pleasure equal to that of serving their country; no rewards comparable to the publick praise attending such services, except the satisfaction in their own minds of doing their duty, and benefiting mankind; then the councils of such a people have generally been wise and steady, the execution of them vigorous, and the common-wealth hath made a glorious figure, and enjoyed the highest pitch of human felicity.

It may be expected, on this occasion, that I should give some instances, from former times, of people, (perhaps *Greeks* or *Romans*) who being actuated by so amiable a temper, have reaped such great benefits from it----- There are, I confess, some instances to be met with both in the *Greek* and *Roman* histories,

stories, which might illustrate and evince what I have advanced; but I am much better pleased with a proof from our own history, which will one day, I doubt not, as much eclipse the splendor of any transactions among the *Greeks* or *Romans*, as our heroes out-shine theirs. I mean the history of our nation for the last twenty years, and a true character of the great men who have been the principal actors in the glorious scene. If the cotemporaries of these persons, whose desert has been so eminent, should fail of bestowing on them such rewards as their services have richly merited, (which it is great pity they should) yet posterity will undoubtedly do ample justice to their memories.

WHEN there is so large a field for panegyrick, it is, I confess, somewhat difficult to know where to begin; but as disinterestedness in those, who have the management of a nation's concerns, is a most excellent virtue, absolutely necessary to complete a publick character, and highly beneficial to a kingdom, this seems to claim the first rank. The few pensions, or lucrative places, enjoyed by those, who have so eminently served their country; the few they have bestowed on their friends, dependents, or relations, sufficiently set forth their title to this virtue, and evidently demonstrate,

strate, that they esteem the satisfaction of doing so much good to the publick, preferable to all other rewards. As the example of great men always influences those of a lower degree, one cannot, without the greatest pleasure, observe how this spirit of disinterestedness has been of late, and is at present, diffused through the nation. Corruption has indeed been branded with such odious marks, and is become so unfashionable, that we may justly presume, none, worth corrupting, will now take a bribe. In short, we may truly say, that this pernicious and odious vice is at present practised only by the refuse, the very outcasts of the people.

THE next virtue, remarkable in our times, which we shall take notice of, is a concern for the publick welfare. This appears very eminently in the œconomy of all publick affairs; particularly in the great frugality with which our publick treasure is managed; the avoiding all unnecessary expences; and in the paying off so great a part of the national debt; without which, as our most potent neighbour, and heretofore our formidable enemy, is not only out of debt, but, in all respects, much stronger than ever, we must have been in the most dangerous circumstances imaginable.

ON this head, we ought not to forget the dignity with which all national affairs of consequence are treated ; the temper, impartiality, and candour, with which all such subjects are debated, and the inexpressible readiness in hearkening to such advice, and following such councils, as are for the publick benefit.

To our disinterestedness and concern for the publick welfare, we may doubtless ascribe our making use of no little artifices, or corrupt means, to influence particular persons, or societies ; of paying no salaries to those who are not actually employed and fit for their posts ; no pensions to those who do not deserve them, or are not real objects of compassion ; and the great encouragement given to the most expert and able persons. This management does not only save large sums of money to the nation, but is the principal cause that all our publick business is dispatched with the utmost expedition, and performed with all the care and success imaginable---- Indeed, when men have no bye-ends of their own to serve ; no dirty jobs to perform ; nothing but the good of their country in view ; they can have no manner of occasion for expedients, or to form a party by unjust methods.

WE come next to the wisdom of our times, without which our disinterestedness, integrity, or concern for the publick welfare, however laudable, would have operated very feebly to the advantage of the nation.

OUR wisdom then has been wonderfully displayed, *First*, In our negotiations, treaties, alliances, and conventions. These have been so wisely contrived, that they have (as was formerly said of some other most excellent treaties) generally executed themselves.

SECONDLY, In our employing persons of the greatest abilities in all eminent stations; especially as embassadors and publick ministers. This was the more necessary, not only as the honour of a nation is greatly concerned in the behaviour and management of those in such stations, but the welfare of the publick frequently depends very much on their prudent conduct. Indeed, the choice of such excellent personages, to manage publick affairs, is not only a proof of our wisdom, but also of our integrity; for weak or dishonest ministers are always apprehensive of employing wise and good men, lest they should supplant their superiors, or detect their vile practices.

THIRDLY,

THIRDLY, Our national wisdom has appeared in foreseeing events, in a most surprising manner, and preparing so judiciously for them, that we have very rarely been put to any difficulties ourselves, or disconcerted in any of our designs upon others.

FOURTHLY, In knowing perfectly the interests of the several states of *Europe*, properly applying to them, and maintaining a just ballance of power.

FIFTHLY, In supporting the reputation of our country to such a pitch, as it has seldom arrived at. In this particular, we may justly challenge history to shew any period of time, in which this nation has made so extraordinary a figure as at present, and during the last twenty years.

SIXTHLY, In encouraging all the most useful branches of commerce, and taking especial care that trade is neither unnecessarily burdened, nor obstructed.

SEVENTHLY, In maintaining the navy in most excellent order, and using such proper and effectual methods to man it, as cause as little hinderance to our mercantile navigation, as inhumanity to our seamen.

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EIGHTHLY,

EIGHTHLY, As the militia of a nation is its natural strength, and must be even our dernier resort, if any considerable number of enemies should ever land here; our wisdom in managing it, in the manner we do, can never be sufficiently admired; for, without this defence, we must have kept on foot such a standing army as would have been extremely burdensome and dangerous; or this island, though it probably contains two millions of men able to bear arms, may undoubtedly be conquered by thirty thousand men, or even by a much smaller number, landed in *Great-Britain*.

NINTHLY, and *lastly*, Our consummate prudence is in nothing more apparent than in securing the affections of the people to the government. This has been effected partly by demanding no money of them, but what was absolutely necessary for the real service of the publick; shewing plainly, that the nation's treasure was only expended for the nation's benefit; asserting and defending the people's rights; and demonstrating to them, that there are no designs, either by force or fraud, by armies or corruption, to deprive them of their liberties.

It would have been very easy greatly to increase

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increase the number of items on this head of wisdom, as well as on the others of disinterestedness, integrity, and concern for the publick welfare; but the steadiness of our conduct at this time, as well as for the last twenty years, and the present happy circumstances we feel ourselves in, are much more effectual proofs of all these, than any words that can be used. The only doubt then, that remains, is, whether our disinterestedness and integrity, our generous concern for the publick welfare, or our great and consummate wisdom in the direction of our national affairs, are most to be admired. And, if it should be found necessary to enter into a war, I doubt not but these, and our other publick virtues, will shine out in their full lustre; that all the world will then see our management in war will be as remarkable as our behaviour in peace, and that we shall even out-do our usual out-doings^d.

I am, &c.

^d This prediction has been but too fully verified; for our management in the war that soon followed the date of this letter, will remain an indelible reproach upon this nation, and hath been attended with extreme bad consequences: we are now feeling the miserable effects of them, which I heartily wish our present conduct may not render fatal.

A

L E T T E R

To the Same.

S I R,

January 17, 1740-1.

NATIONAL corruption, whenever practised in this kingdom, has principally consisted in an undue m-----l influence on those, who have a right of electing members to serve in p-----t, or on the members of p-----t themselves. If these influences take place, a p-----t so chosen, or so managed, is much more properly a representative of the m-----y than of the people, and will, in all probability, conduct themselves accordingly.

ONE would think that such undue influences should, at first view, appear so dishonest and mischievous, that it would be as unnecessary

unnecessary to shew the ill tendency and malignity of them, as to prove the unfairness and bad consequences of packing or bribing a jury; however, since there are those, who plead for national corruption, especially for a pecuniary, or other undue influence on electors of members to serve in p-----t, it may not be amiss to examine their principal argument, which is this: Without such an influence, say they, the people would, probably, choose persons of *Jacobite* principles to represent them. This, with respect to the majority of the people, who have a right of election, or even any considerable number of them, I believe is not true; for the *Jacobite* interest seems now to be at a very low ebb, even amongst the common people, who are not *Roman* Catholicks; and it is much more so amongst the *Protestant* gentry. Indeed a *Papist*, who is a bigot, may act consistently to desire a *Popish* prince; but a *Protestant*, who endeavours to bring in such a king, must be entirely destitute of common understanding. However, admitting this should be the case; if great numbers of people in this nation, after the present royal family have so long enjoyed the throne, should be in a *Jacobite* interest, it will not be very difficult to discover to whom we are obliged for such measures, as could support so low and despicable a faction,

as that of the *Jacobites* must otherwise have been at this time of day.

As some among the m-----l advocates plead for the necessity of corruption, so there are others, just as wise and honest, who tell us, that the word *Corruption* is full as unintelligible a term as *Conjuring*; “and that a
“certain person is accused of corruption only
“for treating men according to their nature,
“for using rewards and punishments in a
“proper manner, and for suiting his applications to the persons to whom they were
“made.” I hope your readers will give due attention and credit to what such writers assert, whose extraordinary parts, great share of property, uncommon wisdom, and, above all, their clean hands, and perfect disinterestedness, must entitle their arguments and assertions to the most favourable reception with the publick.

BUT, by those eminent persons leave, tho’ punishments for misbehaviour, and suitable rewards for good actions, are absolutely necessary, and, if justly and impartially applied, cannot be deemed corrupt influences; yet, if gentlemen should be dismissed the service of their country, for no other reason than because

* *Vide*, the *Gazetteer* of the 24th of October last.

cause they will not do the drudgery of a m-----r, surely this will be a manifest injury to the publick, as well as to the persons immediately concerned ; and when such rewards, as should only accompany true merit, are bestowed on men for the meanest and most abject compliances to a m-----r, those rewards will then become, in the strictest sense of the words, and in the highest degree, corrupt influences.

I SHALL not, for very obvious reasons, enter the lists with the m-----l writers, to prove that any body, at this time, practises national corruption. I take it for granted that no body does. However, as this vice has formerly been in use, and may again become fashionable, I shall take the liberty to suppose that corruption is a very intelligible term, and proceed to lay before your readers some account of so pernicious an evil, and the effects, which have in times past been, or may for the future be, produced by it.

OUR historians have informed us, that the electing and managing of parliaments by corrupt methods were first practised in the reign of *Richard* the II^d ; a reign, which, for the wickedness of the ministry, the weakness of the prince, and his unhappy catastrophe, will

be for ever remembered. *Rapin* tell us, that this king, in order to bring about some vile designs, had taken all necessary measures to have a parliament at his devotion. “ Some
 “ time since (says my author) he had changed
 “ all the sheriffs of the kingdom, and suffered
 “ none, but what had promised to be subser-
 “ vient to his designs. He had taken the
 “ same precautions, with respect to all officers
 “ that had credit and power in the boroughs
 “ and counties. So by means of the magi-
 “ strates, and persons in publick posts, he had
 “ caused such representatives to be chosen as
 “ he had secured before-hand. If any were
 “ elected not agreeable to him, the sheriffs
 “ were ordered not to return them, but to
 “ cause others to be chosen in their room.
 “ Besides, as the house of commons were the
 “ sole judges in the affair of elections, he was
 “ well assured, that such a parliament would
 “ confirm or reject whom he pleased.

“ IT must not be thought very difficult
 “ (continues this author) for a king of *Eng-*
 “ *land* to execute such a project. Experience
 “ has since confirmed, on numberless occa-
 “ sions, that, by the like ways, it is very pos-
 “ sible to cause representatives to be chosen
 “ devoted to the court. However, historians
 “ remark, that it was in this parliament that
 “ such

“such practices were first used. But it must
 “likewise be added, that it was one of the
 “principal causes of *Richard's* destruction.
 “***** And indeed it is impossible
 “that a nation can see their liberties in the
 “hands of men, whom they have not them-
 “selves freely chosen, without desiring to be
 “delivered from such an oppression.”

THE same author tells us, that *Henry* the
 IVth, “Though he had caused *Richard* to be
 “deposed for usurping an arbitrary power
 “contrary to the laws, yet he himself plainly
 “shewed, by certain proceedings, he would
 “have been glad to govern with an absolute
 “authority. This chiefly appeared in the
 “elections of members of parliament. By
 “the directions of the court, certain artifices
 “were practised, to render the freedom of
 “voting of no use, since the sheriffs took the
 “liberty to return such representatives as had
 “not a majority of votes. This is a thing
 “of so fatal a consequence, that it may be
 “affirmed, the liberty of the *English* will no
 “longer subsist, than whilst the privilege of
 “freely electing their representatives in parlia-
 “ment stands inviolated. If once the sove-
 “reign comes to chuse what representatives he
 “pleases, the bounds of the royal authority
 “will be in the end so enlarged, that nothing
 “but

“ but the mere shadow of liberty will remain.
 “ ***** But it may farther be added, that
 “ all the kings of *England*, who have enjoyed
 “ a more absolute power than the rest, acquired
 “ it by this way ; I mean, by procuring their
 “ creatures to be elected. When a parliament
 “ consists of such members, it is no longer
 “ the king that is charged with incroachments
 “ upon the people’s liberty, but it is the na-
 “ tion itself, that voluntarily runs into slavery.
 “ And if afterwards they are resolved to throw
 “ off their chains, they can only succeed by
 “ violent means ; and this, by the way, is
 “ the spring of most of the civil wars, so often
 “ kindled in *England*.”

WE have now taken a short view of the
 beginning of p——y or national corruption,
 and also of some of the fatal consequences
 attending it. If we were to make our obser-
 vations on the reigns succeeding those already
 taken notice of, even down to the times im-
 mediately preceding our own, it would ap-
 pear that this corruption was only practised
 under bad administrations.

WHEN the actions of a ministry are wholly
 directed to the good of the publick, there
 can be no occasion for such a ministry to prac-
 tice corruption. If a ministry assiduously
 apply

apply themselves, during a time of peace, to pay off the nation's debts, and demand no supplies of money but what are absolutely necessary for publick occasions, and misapply no part of what may be raised; if wise and incorrupt judges are appointed to preside in courts of judicature, and all other proper measures taken, that justice may be speedily and impartially executed; if the manufactures of a country are encouraged, its foreign trade promoted as much as possible; the subjects, both at home and abroad, supported in all their rights and privileges; if no unnecessary wars are entered into; but if such as should at any time become unavoidable, are so managed that our coasts and our trading ships may be carefully protected, and the enemy attacked and annoyed with all possible vigour; if a ministry, I say, conduct the nation's affairs in this manner, what occasion can there be to corrupt a people or a p-----t? Both must be sensible of the benefits they enjoy, and it will be out of the power of the most artful men, to create an ill opinion of such an administration.

BUT it must be acknowledged, that national corruption is absolutely necessary to the safety of a m-----r, who shall neglect or mismanage all publick affairs, and whose sole view may
be

be to engross honours and riches to himself, his family and dependents; his business will be to corrupt those, who might otherwise call him to account for his ill actions, and make them sharers in the pillage of his country.

ONE great use of our p-----ts is their being a terror to evil m-----rs, and so long as our p-----ts are without any undue attachment to m-----rs, such p-----ts will be an effectual check to ill practices, and will in the end be always too hard for wicked m---rs; but if any m-----r hereafter, instead of quarrelling with p-----ts, which has generally been destructive to the m-----r, should be so artful as either to procure a p-----t to be chosen to his mind, or by undue influences gain the majority of a p-----t after it is chosen, what may he not then bring about? what may he not then act with impunity?

If such a m-----r should, for a series of years, make treaties, or conventions, contrary to the honour and interest of his country, or even destructive to both, such a p-----t may approve of them. If he should, for a long time, suffer the nation to be insulted and injured by a foreign power, without taking proper measures to prevent those grievances; and should wantonly consume the public
lick

lick treasure in fitting out fleets of inaction; and if when forced into a war he should equally neglect the safety of our commerce, and the proper methods of distressing the enemy, and by his pusillanimous behaviour encourage our neighbours to attack us; yet, still such a conduct may receive the sanction of such a p-----t. Nay, if this m-----r, in future times, when the nation may be engaged in war, should neglect to supply our generals or admirals abroad, with provisions, ammunition, or other necessary stores, and not send them reinforcements in time, by which means those generals or admirals, however brave or skilful, may be disabled from attacking our enemies, and even become a sacrifice to them, yet it could not be reasonably expected, that such a m-----r should be called to account by such a p-----t.

THUS it is evident, that if ever this kingdom should be so unhappy as to sink into national corruption, and not recover itself in time, there could then be no national justice reasonably expected, and consequently there could be no national safety remaining.

I am, &c.

A
L E T T E R
F R O M A

Gentleman in the Country,

T O A

Member of Parliament in LONDON.

S I R,

March 4, 1741.

I Received your letter, which gave me an account of the late proceedings of the h—— of c——, and the alterations subsequent to them, with great pleasure: it must, indeed, be owing to stupidity, or something worse, not to be highly delighted with the pleasing prospect that now opens to our view: but, in order to obtain those advantages from the present change which the nation hopes for, it will be necessary, seriously to consider what the nation, on this important occasion, will expect.

TRUE

TRUE it is, our present circumstances are, by a long series of ignorant, cowardly, corrupt, and wicked management, become so perplexed and unhappy, that I fear the people will expect much more than can be performed^f; but we ought not to be so discouraged at the melancholy situation of affairs, as to give up all hopes of redressing them. On the contrary, we should, on that very account, exert ourselves in the most vigorous manner.

WHEN a vessel is in a storm, or driven among rocks or quicksands, then is the time for the pilot and mariners to use their utmost skill and power for its preservation. If the *Romans*, when *Annibal* was at their gates, (a much worse condition than we are in) had despaired of their country's safety, and in a supine and pusillanimous manner neglected its defence, that brave commonwealth must then have come to a period; whereas, by acting with courage and unanimity, they afterwards conquered that very *Annibal*, and at last totally destroyed *Carthage*, their formidable enemy.

THE advantages that the people will immediately expect from this change, and which
I hope

^f It is certain that the people were most miserably disappointed of their most reasonable expectations by this change of hands.

I hope they will not be disappointed in, because they are undoubtedly practicable, are,

FIRST, The prompt and effectual security of their foreign trade, by cruizers and convoys being properly appointed and stationed for that purpose, and a watchful eye kept on the captains commanded on such service, that they do their duty.

SECONDLY, That our coasts may be carefully guarded, to prevent insults from our present enemies, or any other power that may be disposed to disturb us.

THIRDLY, That the war against *Spain* may be carried on with the utmost vigour, in order to bring that nation to reasonable terms: and, if our prosecuting so just and necessary a war in this manner, should cause any other power to interfere, we ought to be in a condition to shew them that we will be masters of our own councils, and that none, with impunity, shall dare to say to this nation, "Thus far shall you go, and no farther."

AND, *Fourthly*, Whereas the publick treasure has, for many years, been most profusely and wickedly squandered away, in fruitless negociations, equipments, and expeditions, and

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also for very corrupt purposes, that the utmost good husbandry may now be practised.

FIFTHLY, The nation will certainly expect, that those who have conducted our publick affairs for some years past, should be called to account ; and, indeed, they themselves, if they are innocent, will, undoubtedly, desire the same ; for, by that means, they may have an opportunity of clearing their characters from that load of infamy which at present lies upon them : but, if they should be found guilty, how necessary is it (abstract from all party-heats or animosities, which I heartily wish may be wholly laid aside) to do justice to the publick, in obliging those, who have pillaged their country, to restore their plunder, and in making them such examples as may deter others from the like practices ?

THESE are some of the advantages that the people expect from the present change, not, I hope, of hands only, but of measures also ; which will, indeed, render it a happy change. But these are not all they will expect ; the place and pension bills, and parliaments being settled on their antient foundation, are so necessary to the welfare of the state, that they doubt not but these also will pass into laws. There are also some salutary and necessary

clauses in the act of settlement, that have been repealed, which would undoubtedly be of the greatest use and importance to this nation, if they were again put in force.

AND since we are now so happy to have a parliament, from which we have reason to hope for the greatest services, this is therefore the time to consider of, and form such laws and establishments, as may fix this nation on as secure and firm a foundation, as the nature of human things will admit. The particulars I have already mentioned, will undoubtedly conduce to this good purpose; but, as national liberty is certainly the *sine qua non* of national happiness, you will, I know, indulge me in throwing together some thoughts on that subject.

As national liberty then, is certainly one of the greatest benefits that a people can enjoy, those who are possessed of it cannot be too jealous of any encroachments made upon it, nor too careful to preserve so inestimable a blessing.

THE principal preservatives of national liberty must consist in the laws and constitution of a state, or in the virtues of individuals. As to the first, it may be truly said, that every
form

form of government is more or less perfect, as it is better or worse calculated to preserve the liberty of the community, and the several members of it.

IF ambitious and wicked men can deprive the people of the essentials of liberty, they are many times willing enough to leave them the name and appearance of it: thus the *Roman* emperors, long after they had destroyed the liberties of that noble and powerful commonwealth, left the people the names of a senate, consuls, &c. but they were the names only; for as both senate and consuls, and all other courts and magistrates, after the loss of the people's liberties, derived their beings from the emperors, and subsisted only during their will and pleasure, so they were under a necessity of conforming to the dictates of their masters, and acting agreeable to their commands. *France* also has still the name of parliaments remaining; but they are now no longer representatives of the people, to make laws and raise money for the publick use; no longer bulwarks against the power of their princes; but are dwindled into mere courts of judicature and record, in which the edicts of their monarchs are registered.

AMONG the various means of preserving

the freedom of countries, that of arming and training the people is certainly none of the least; and, considering that this method would not only save the expence of standing armies, but obviate the danger of them to liberty, and be also the most effectual protection against foreign invasions, one would wonder it should not be more generally practised: surely, the reason cannot be, that all endeavours to wrest from an armed people their liberties, must be attended with great danger to those who attempt it.

I THINK it is *Machiavel* who has said, that the defence of a state should be entrusted to no less than the whole strength of that state; and how can the whole strength of any state be exerted, unless the people are armed? We, of this island, are very apt to think, that our protection against foreign invasions consists in our wooden walls, as we call them, meaning our ships; and I am very far from undervaluing this protection, but whenever we have been invaded, or threatened with an invasion, we have been greatly alarmed, and not without reason; because, if a considerable force should be landed here, which surely no one will say is impossible, we should not be able to defend our country; whereas, if we were an armed nation, we need never fear an invasion:

vasion : for what people, in their senses, would attempt to invade a country where, if they should escape, or over-power our fleets, and get on shore, they must encounter, perhaps, a million of as good soldiers as any in *Europe*? And these not mercenaries, the major part of whom are enervated with sloth and debauchery, and fight for six-pence a day ; but with men, many of whom are greatly invigorated by labour and sobriety, and who fight to defend large properties, their families, their liberties, and their religion. [§] *Diodorus Siculus* has well observed, “ That it is to act against “ the rules, not only of sound politicks, but “ good sense also, to entrust the defence and “ security of a state to people who have no “ interest in its preservation.”

THERE are, indeed, many objections made against training our people to arms ; and, undoubtedly, it would, especially at first, be attended with some inconveniencies ; but if, to these, we oppose the preservation of our liberties against the designs of wicked and ambitious men at home, and the defence of our country against foreign enemies, we shall see these inconveniencies much more than counter-ballanced.

THE advantage of a people's being armed, to protect them against foreign invaders, is obvious to every one; and the security that this is against the domestick invaders of a nation's liberties, is very evident also, and may be seen in a clear light by what happened at *Geneva* in the year 1734.

THE people of this little commonwealth, perceiving that a part of their government had assumed more power than the constitution of the state allowed, or was consistent with the liberties of the publick, made proper remonstrances against those encroachments; but to no effect; for some of the magistrates, instead of giving satisfaction to the injured people, and redressing their grievances, had concerted measures to subdue them by force: this was no sooner known, but the burghers, citizens, and others, to the number of about five thousand men, were immediately in arms, under their proper officers, and took possession of the arsenal, and the gates of the city: these being secured, they desired a conference with the magistrates; which being granted, the rights of the people were recognized, the principal invaders of them punished, and the publick tranquility restored; and, what is extremely to the honour of all that were concerned, this affair was conducted

in

in so orderly a manner, that not the least injury was done to any man's person or property^h.

VARIOUS have been the means made use of to enslave states and kingdoms : sometimes open force hath been practised ; but, as this is very apt to alarm the people, and has not always proved successful, bribery and corruption have been found necessary measures to bring about this destructive evil. And, indeed, the most able tyrants have begun, at least, with these practices. It is a question if *Julius Cæsar* himself, with perhaps as great abilities as any man ever possessed, could have accomplished the enslaving of his country, if he had not prepared his way to it by these nefarious arts. It is, at least, evident, that he thought them necessary ; for they were practised by him with astonishing profusion, and indeed with all the success he could wish :
 “ He is said to have given the consul *Paullus*
 “ the value of three hundred thousand pounds,
 “ and to *Curio*, the tribune, much more. The
 “ first wanted it to defray the charges of those
 “ splendid buildings, which he had under-
 “ taken to raise at his own cost ; and the se-
 “ cond to clear himself of the load of his
 X 4 “ debts,

^h The author was informed of these particulars at *Geneva*, not long after they happened.

“ debts, which amounted to about half a
 “ million ; for he had wasted his great for-
 “ tunes so effectually, in a few years, that he
 “ had no other revenue left, as *Pliny* says, but
 “ in the hopes of a civil war. These facts
 “ are mentioned by all the *Roman* writers.

“ *Momentumque fuit mutatus Curio rerum,*
 “ *Gallorum captus spoliis & Cæsar's auro.*

LUCAN IV. 819.

“ *Caught by the spoils of Gaul and Cæsar's gold,*
 “ *Curio turn'd traitor, and his country sold.*

“ And *Servius* applies that passage of *Virgil*,
 “ *Vendit hic auro patriam,* to the case of
 “ *Curio's* selling *Rome* to *Cæsar* ⁱ.”

AND here one cannot but stop a moment to deplore the miserable effects of luxury and prodigality : for, as the above cited author observes, this *Curio* was a young nobleman of shining parts ; the favourite of the city, the leader of the young nobility, and a warm assertor of the authority of the senate, against the power of the triumvirate ; but, by extravagancy, was driven to the necessity of selling himself to *Cæsar*, and is commonly considered as one of the chief instruments of his country's destruction.

WHEN

ⁱ Doctor *Middleton's* Life of *Cicero*.

WHEN those who, by their stations and abilities, should be the assertors and defenders of the people's rights, become the betrayers of them, publick liberty must then be in the most imminent danger, and hardly to be preserved without a miracle. And as, by a multitude of instances, in all ages, we see that necessitous men are not to be confided in, nay, that they cannot even confide in themselves; how careful should we all be to avoid luxury and prodigality, those pests of society, those destroyers of virtue, which may reduce, and we see daily do reduce, those in the most affluent circumstances, to the utmost indigency; and cause them to commit crimes, of which, before they were in that condition, neither themselves nor others thought them capable?

MEN who manage public affairs merely with a view to private interest, and whose whole conduct is one continued series of ignorance or knavery, will rejoice when great and able men become necessitous, and encourage the practice of those vices which reduce them to that condition; for, by this means, they will, in all probability, soon become dependents, and are then not only prevented from opposing measures they do not approve, but are obliged even to defend
and

and promote those which they know are destructive to their country's interest. Too many instances of this kind are recent among us; but surely, if gentlemen would consider what a miserable state of slavery they are by this means reduced to, even a slavery of mind; and above all, the irreparable mischiefs they may, by this conduct, bring upon their country, they would shun all dependency, and the causes of it, as the greatest evil that could befall them.

IF crimes are to be estimated by the malignity and extent of their consequences, then none can be so heinous as those committed against the liberty of the publick: crimes committed against private persons, however wicked, may be confined in their effects to a few sufferers, and to the present time; but the destruction of publick liberty must affect a whole nation, and may very probably perpetuate their misery. Yet we have lately seen the assertors of national liberty treated with the utmost contempt, as a parcel of political enthusiasts; and the underminers of this beautiful fabrick, sporting themselves with its destruction. But however some persons may deride private œconomy and publick-spiritedness; these are the virtues that greatly contribute to the preservation of a state; for
nothing

nothing is more certain, than that PRIVATE VIRTUES ARE PUBLIC BENEFITS.

AND among all private virtues, there is hardly one that contributes more to the benefit of the publick than disinterestedness: the antient *Persians*, who were once a very brave people, though too soon corrupted, and then soon ruined by luxury, carried this point of disinterestedness so high, that, as *Herodotus* informs us, when a *Persian* sacrificed he was not to pray for himself alone, but for the prosperity of the whole state. But we have lately seen *Britons* who have sacrificed every thing to themselves; even the honour, the interest, and the liberty of their country. Pray, what has produced so many scandalous and pernicious treaties and conventions; so many inactive equipments and expeditions? What has occasioned such a waste of publick treasure? and what has brought such an inundation of corruption upon us, but Self-interestedness?

BUT though private virtues do, indeed, greatly contribute to the preservation of a state, and are more particularly useful and necessary to save it from destruction, when plunged in great difficulties, and for that very reason were never more necessary to
this

this nation than at present, yet the virtue of individuals is too precarious a tenure for national safety; for as we see, by sad experience, how little virtue is generally to be found in those who are commonly entrusted with the conduct of publick affairs, the principal solid security for a state must consist in such laws and practices as may, as much as the nature of things will permit, put it out of the power of bad men to ruin their country; and among these I know of none that would be more effectual than a law for arming, and training our people in a proper manner.

I am, &c.

P. S. I cannot well close my letter without observing to you the scandalous practice, during the late Ad-----n, of placing men in all stations without the least regard to their abilities or fitness for what they were to transact: there was, indeed, a remarkable shyness of employing men of great parts, the reason of which is very obvious; the principal recommendation to an employment, being an implicit and servile obedience to the dictates of the m-----r, especially in p-----t. This was a manifest discouragement to persons of merit, who excelled in the knowledge and practice of business, and was one
of

of the principal causes that the nation's affairs were so very ill managed. It is to be hoped, that the gentlemen, in the present ad-----n, will proceed in a quite different manner; for there are few things that conduce more to the advantage of a state, than to encourage and employ men of ability and integrity.



TO

T O

*The Most Noble, the Right Honourable,
the Honourable*

Nobility and Gentry,

Associated for the

Preservation of the GAME.

August 5, 1756.

OBSERVING by the advertisements in the news-papers, that in these perilous times, the most perilous, in some respects, that *England* has seen since queen *Elizabeth's* reign, you continue your meetings for that most useful, most excellent, and most laudable purpose for which you first formed yourselves into a society, I take the liberty to put you in mind of a circumstance, which, however trifling it may appear to you, and how much

much soever neglected, seems nevertheless to be of some consequence in itself, and absolutely necessary for preserving the game to you and your posterity: what I mean is the preservation of our country. For, as I take it, the propriety of the lands and the game will go together. Now if our enemies, the *French*, should get our country from us, which is certainly worth securing were it only for the sake of preserving the partridges, the pheasants, the hares, &c. whose would all these things be?

THAT we are in the utmost danger of losing our country is apparent to all men who are not bereaved of every grain of understanding. For such formidable preparations to invade this island were never made before by so near and so potent an enemy: neither did so many unhappy circumstances ever before concur to our destruction: the *French* have no other enemy than us to deal with, or to employ their numerous forces against: we have no friend or ally in the world to assist or succour us. On the contrary, several powers of *Europe*, particularly the *Danes* and *Swedes*, under the specious pretence of protecting their trade, have combined to assist our enemies and distress us. It is likewise said that our most cordial and faithful

faithful friends the *Dutch* are about to do the like. Add to this, that the *Spaniards* have equipped a strong squadron of ships, and for what purpose is too apparent to admit of the least doubt. In this most dangerous condition, who would but suppose, if they did not know the contrary, that the whole nation was armed: so far from it, that you gentlemen gamekeepers have, in your great wisdom, been the means that those who might be rendered the most useful to defend their country, are, for the sake of preserving the game, entirely disarmed.

BUT this is not the only instance you have given of your consummate wisdom; for undoubtedly you, or some of your wise society, have had the management of p-----k a-----s.

WHEN it was determined to break with *France*, by making prize of their ships, why did we only provoke, and not disable our enemies? This latter might have been done in a good degree at least, by beginning with them two months sooner, and consequently having a very good chance to intercept several hundred of their homeward-bound ships, which, by our losing so much time, got to their ports in safety. And why, as soon as ever a rupture became inevitable, was not
a squadron

a squadron sent to the *Mediterranean*, strong enough effectually to prevent any attempt against *Minorca*? And when a few ships, too few by half, were sent to relieve that important place, why were they put under the command of one who had never been in any action, nor given a single proof of his capacity for such a service, or indeed for any service? Certainly no reason can be given unless he was one of your society. If you had wanted some partridges or pheasants to treat your friends with, would you have sent a fellow to kill them who had never fired a gun in his life? No, no, you would certainly have employed one of your best shot in so arduous an affair.

BUT *Minorca* is lost! most ignominiously lost! Must not all *Europe* despise us for our conduct? And let me tell you, gentlemen, when a nation is once despised it is soon trampled upon. Will not the *French* be greatly elated by this success of their first attempt in these parts of the world since the present quarrel, and think it an earnest of succeeding in a much more important conquest? this conquest which they meditate, is no less than that of these kingdoms: and what should hinder them from carrying their point? Our only hopes are in the squadron before *Brest*, and in our army. This squa-

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dron is continually growing weaker and weaker by the foulness of the ships and their want of repair; and much more still by the sickness among the seamen which greatly prevails at this time; whilst that of the *French* is encreasing in strength by an addition to the number both of ships and seamen. May we not, every day, expect to hear that the enemy's fleet of clean well-fitted ships, in excellent order, and fully manned with healthy seamen, is come out to fight our already half-disabled squadron. And what will be the consequence of a defeat, if that should happen to us, is easy to foresee. We shall then lie open to an invasion, for which purpose the *French* will undoubtedly collect all the ships and vessels in their ports of the ocean and channel, and very probably hire of the *Dutch*, or oblige them to furnish, what more they have occasion for. By this means they may pour in upon us, at many and distant places, such numbers of troops as it will be impossible for our army, divided as it must then be into many small corps, to make head against. Thus this nation, which has so long enjoyed peace and plenty, and rioted in luxury and wantonness, will become a scene, a dreadful scene, of war, of blood, and of slaughter, and very probably be destroyed or enslaved?

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THE *French* king has promised his subjects ample revenge for the losses they have sustained by what they call the piratical depredations we have committed upon them ; and his declarations breathe a spirit of revenge. The people of *France*, by what they have suffered in their trade, and by the artful management of their superiors, are taught to look upon us as a nation of pirates, as enemies to mankind, who ought to be extirpated from the face of the earth.

BIG with the most implacable resentments, and animated by the hopes of being recompensed and rewarded with the pillage of this wealthy country, these sons of violence are now waiting an opportunity at once to gratify their avarice, their ambition, and their revenge.

ONE method, and one only, would certainly and effectually have enabled us to baffle these attempts, and disappoint the sanguine hopes of the devourer.—That method you, or some of you, for reasons known only to yourselves, have rendered abortive.

WHAT think you, gentlemen, not only of the loss of the game, but to be serious, as the subject most certainly requires we should be,

of losing, not only your places, your pensions, your honours and dignities, but your estates, and all that is valuable in the world?

Assure yourselves, that those, who have most to lose, will be the most certain, as well as the greatest sufferers. A tempest may spare the low and humble shrubs, although the tall and proud cedars are torn up by the roots. Indeed, if those, who have exposed the unarmed nation to become, perhaps, an easy prey to its greedy and inveterate enemy, were to be the only sufferers, they would receive no more than the just reward of their doings, and hardly deserve to be pitied: but, when a whole nation, the most remarkable in *Europe* for wealth, trade, manufactures, arts, sciences, and liberty, (how pleased should I be to add, for wisdom and virtue!) when such a nation is in the utmost danger of total destruction, is it possible that the great can be so involved in party-disputes, so stupified by luxury and indolence, or so captivated by mean and sordid views, as not to exert themselves to the utmost, and use all practicable and probable methods for its preservation.

Is this a time for some of you to think of little else than scraping up wealth for yourselves, and procuring places, pensions, and preferments for your relations and dependents?

dents? And for others to pass the nights in gaming, and the days in feasting and rioting, and the most supine indolence?

ROUZE then, in time, from your sleep, lest it prove a sleep of death! Trust not to the precarious defence of your ships, nor to the too weak protection of your army, but arm the nation for the nation's safety.

IF this be not immediately done, what can you expect but to see an incensed and enraged enemy landed on your coasts, and driving the poor, unarmed, naked, and defenceless inhabitants before them; setting fire to the towns and villages, and carrying terror and destruction wherever they go? What then will become of your fine estates, and magnificent houses? The invaders will either keep them for their own use, if they find that practicable, or otherwise do all the mischief they can to the former, and lay the latter level with the ground.

WE may expect to see all the great and wealthy towns and cities in the kingdom, and particularly this capital, first pillaged, and then laid in ashes. We may expect to see our wives and daughters dishonoured before our eyes, and multitudes of both sexes given

326 *To the* NOBILITY, GENTRY, &c.

up to the devouring sword. And as for those, who escape the dreadful carnage, they must become slaves to the imperious conqueror, who will subjugate this nation to his tyrannical dominion. And be it remembered, that, if this nation should be thus conquered and ruined, it will be for want of arming the people in time, and raising such a numerous, well-disciplined militia, as this country is able, ready, and willing to furnish.



A
 L E T T E R
 TO AN
 E L E C T O R

Of Considerble Interest

In the Borough of * * * * *,

IN ANSWER

To a Query, *If a Gentleman, who proposed himself a Candidate to serve for that Borough in Parliament, was in the Court or Country Interest.*

Written in the Year 1740.

S I R,

Y Esterday I was favoured with your kind letter, and entirely agree with you that true friendship cannot subsist without freedom: I use it myself, and sincerely approve

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of

of it in others. But give me leave to observe, that I strongly suspect you have received some account of me to my disadvantage: and, as it is very possible I may have been misrepresented, you will please to indulge me in giving a true account of myself, by which you will also have a full answer to the questions you have put to me, viz. *If I am in the court interest, or, in that which some call, The country interest?*

To these queries I answer, with the greatest sincerity, that I am of no party. I have, to the utmost of my power, endeavoured to keep clear of parties and party-prejudices: for I have long observed, that a party-man can hardly be an honest man. Party-prejudices stick so close to men that they very much obstruct the free use of reason; and party-differences and animosities frequently occasion, even among persons who would otherwise be the dearest friends, the most uncharitable, unjust, and cruel treatment of one another.

I HAVE, indeed, often heard it said, that a person, who is not a party-man, can make no considerable figure in publick life, especially in the h—— of c——. If I thought this was true, it would not, in the least, shake
my

my resolution of adhering to no party : for the character I desire, above all others, is that of an honest man, and a true friend to my country ; and, to speak the truth, I heartily despise making any figure, or gaining any advantages, which are incompatible with this character.

HOWEVER, I cannot subscribe to the opinion, that a person who does not inlist himself in a party, will make but a mean figure in the h----- of c----- . Suppose a member of that house, of a good understanding, well acquainted with publick affairs, particularly those relating to trade, and who speaks with readiness and propriety, should constantly argue and vote agreeable to his sentiments, without any regard to party ; why should not such a person be well esteemed, well heard, and consequently make a very good figure in that assembly ? What such a one speaks, would evidently appear to come from his heart, and would therefore create esteem for the speaker, and, as my lord *Bacon* expresses it, come home to the bosoms of his hearers. There is a gentleman who has been one of the representatives for the capital city of this kingdom in several parliaments, and has filled that station with honour to himself, and done great service to the publick, whom

whom this description so nearly resembles, that I need not name him. As far as my abilities would permit, I should be proud to imitate this gentleman's conduct.

IT must be confessed, that a member of the ----- who should act in this free and unbiassed manner, would be in little likelihood of obtaining any place, pension, or preferment; but as I neither want, or would, on any terms, accept either of these, that consideration would not, in the least, affect my conduct.

You may, sir, be assured that I am from principle in the interest of liberty, both religious and civil. In the latter part of queen *Anne's* reign, though I was but young, I did all in my power to oppose the destructive measures which were then taking. I voted, wherever I had a right to vote, and sometimes at no small hazard, for such gentlemen as I thought would endeavour to prevent the mischiefs which, at that time, threatened the nation.

BUT to come still closer to your question. Though I am not so in the court interest, that I would vote for what might be proposed by the court, if I thought it prejudicial to the publick, yet I should scorn to oppose what the court promoted, if I believed it would be for the service of the nation: I freely own,
that

that whoever acted in this manner, would, in my opinion, be a bad man. I assure you I should be altogether as far from espousing any measures the country-party might take, when I thought them detrimental to the publick ; on the contrary, I should think it my indispensable duty to oppose them with all my power. Some very eminent gentlemen of this party have offered to secure me a seat in p-----, but, as I well knew they expected from me a strict attachment to them and their measures, I therefore did not accept the favour : for I am determined not to attach myself to any party, but to go into p-----, if I obtain a seat there, entirely a free man. Indeed, nothing is to me more obvious, than that the generality of party-men are but the dupes and tools of their leaders ; and that pursuing party-interest is the ruin of publick-interest.

IF your borough, sir, will accept of so unfashionable a person as I have described and acknowledged myself to be, it shall meet with the utmost returns of gratitude consistent with that integrity which I prefer, and am determined to maintain, before all other considerations.

I am, &c.

SOME

S O M E

R E A S O N S

S H E W I N G

Why the BILL to repeal the
STATUTE against CONJURATION,
WITCHCRAFT, &c. should not
pass into a Law.

Written in the Year 1736.

IT is conceived, if the said bill should pass into a law, the people will have reason to suppose that the l-----e is of opinion there are no such creatures as wizards or witches; the contrary of which is thought demonstrable.

IF it can be proved that people have been, and now are bewitched, it must follow that there are such persons as wizards, or witches.

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To prove there are at this time, and for many ages have been, wizards or witches in the world, we shall not have recourse to instances of witchcraft of a private nature acted in a corner, knowing how much the credit of those have been supported by fraud and deceit on one side; folly and credulity on the other: but we shall appeal to transactions of a publick nature, ancient and modern, civil and ecclesiastical, which it is supposed all the sensible part of mankind must acknowledge could not have happened, unless people had been bewitched.

THE first instance, we shall take from sacred writ, the eighth chapter of the first book of *Samuel*, which shews that the people of *Israel* would have a king to rule over them, though God, by the mouth of his prophet, declared, that this king would take their sons and daughters for himself; their fields and vineyards for his servants; and, in a word, make slaves of the whole nation; yet they said, *Nay, but there shall be a king over us.*

NOTWITHSTANDING absolute power, in a single person, renders all, under such a one's dominion, slaves; yet this is a form of government which always was, and still is, idolized in the world: now, as liberty is of so valuable

valuable a nature, that scarce any other benefit can be fully enjoyed without it, surely men would not tamely part with such a blessing, much less run voluntarily into slavery, if they were not bewitched. And, indeed, are not the tyrants themselves who desire to govern arbitrarily, bewitched also? For what pleasure can a man, not bewitched, take in ruling over slaves?

WERE not *Alexander* and *Cæsar* bewitched? The first to run about the world slaughtering multitudes of his fellow-creatures without provocation; and the other to inflave his country? Was not a late grand monarch bewitched to make such havock among his own people and his neighbours, only to gratify a boundless ambition? And are not great part of the world bewitched, to bestow the highest encomiums on those actions by which they are inflaved and ruined; and extol those persons for heroes, whose chief employment, and greatest glory, has been to destroy their own species?

BUT to look at home. Does not the history of this country afford many instances that most of our kings and queens have been, and that the people also were, frequently bewitched? To go no further back than the
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reign of queen *Mary* the 1st, of infamous memory, was not she bewitched to neglect all the civil affairs of her government, and apply herself only to establish *Popery* among us? For which pious purpose she caused some of the best of her subjects to be put to death, and let loose that *Cerberus*, *Bonner*, and other voracious and blood-thirsty creatures, to worry and destroy the people by the most cruel and inhuman barbarities.

THE reign of her successor, queen *Elizabeth*, does not afford many instances of witchcraft: yet there are persons who think this queen was bewitched with very high notions of prerogative, and with a strong attachment to the trappings of *Popery*.

KING *James* the 1st might well have spared himself the pains of writing to prove the reality of witchcraft; for almost all his actions were a clear and ample demonstration of it. Would he have put Sir *Walter Raleigh* to death; have chosen such favourites, and been so profuse to them; have thought either of the *Spanish* or *French* matches for his son; have been continually writing against *Popery*; constantly acting for it; have given such encouragements to *Papists*, who had endeavoured to destroy him and the nation; have managed
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so meanly in the business of the Palatinate; have been so amused and deceived by the *Spaniards*, and have betrayed his own councils to their embassador; have been always poorly and meanly negotiating, when he ought to have been acting warmly and vigorously? In a word, would he have reduced this nation from the high state of reputation and prosperity, in which he found it, to the poor, low, despicable condition, in which he left it, if he had not been bewitched?

THAT his son and successor was bewitched, nobody will deny, but those who are so themselves. For his favourites and prime ministers, this king generally chose those who neither knew, nor designed, the true interest of the nation; and who were extremely disagreeable to his parliaments and people. To preside in the church he appointed one of the most furious bigots and zealots that had appeared in this nation since *St. Thomas Becket*. This prince's actions, and the end of them, were such as might have been reasonably expected from his own temper, his education in exorbitant notions of prerogative, and the divine right of princes, and from the advice of his queen, and such other ignorant and violent counsellors as he generally made choice of.

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THE opposition to the illegal, arbitrary, and destructive measures of this king, was begun, and for a considerable time carried on, by some of the wisest, bravest, and honestest men this country ever produced; and, undoubtedly, with a view of obtaining and securing the rights of the publick: were not the people bewitched, after this noble struggle for liberty, and the success of it, to submit to the usurper *Cromwell*, and not establish such a government as might have perpetuated the happiness of this nation, and have rendered it the envy and terror of its neighbours?

AT the restoration, were not the people evidently bewitched, to make no better terms with a prince who had conceived the greatest aversion to parliaments; and whose religion, if he had any, was *Popish*; and whose scheme of politicks, if he ever formed one, was that of arbitrary government? When this king came to the crown, was he not bewitched to endeavour the destruction of the *Dutch*, and the strengthening and aggrandizing the *French*? And to act in most other affairs against the inclinations and interest of the nation, and indeed against his own true interest also?

HIS successor, notwithstanding the religion he professed, and the well-grounded dislike

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and averſion that great part of the nation had conceived againſt him, might nevertheless have been eaſy and happy in the throne, if he had not been ſo bewitched to *Popery* as to uſe his utmoſt endeavours to introduce and eſtabliſh that miſchievous religion among us: and had he not, by a particular piece of witchcraft, been engaged in a quarrel with the clergy, by ſeizing ſome of their rights and revenues, he might poſſibly have ſucceeded in his deſigns; but, as it happily fell out, they ended in his own deſtruction.

THE next reign was not without ſome proofs of witchcraft. For how could it elſe have happened that ſuch men ſhould for a conſiderable time be employed in ſome of the principal ſtations, whom the king knew to be violent oppoſers of that revolution which placed him upon the throne; and had great reaſon to think, though they complied outwardly with his government, were arrant *Jacobites* in their hearts: theſe men being ſo truſted, was very probably one cauſe that our councils, armies, and fleets were, at that time, generally ſo unſucceſſful. It muſt alſo have proceeded from witchcraft, that if, on the former king's abdication, and this king's acceſſion to the throne, any thing greatly neceſſary for the ſecurity of this nation's liberties

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ties appeared farther to be done, that such a good work was not perfected on so favourable an occasion.

IN the following reign it must be acknowledged there were very few instances of witchcraft before the latter end of it, when a certain wizard (who, 'till that time, was thought no conjurer) so bewitched both prince and people, by a sermon he preached in the metropolis, that by this, and some concurring circumstances, every thing was brought into the utmost confusion, and the nation to the brink of destruction. We were so bewitched as basely to betray our friends, and dissolve an alliance by means of which the exorbitant and dangerous power of *France* had been humbled; to displace a general under whose wise and auspicious conduct such great and almost unequalled actions had been performed; and to make such a peace as hath enabled *France*, in about twenty years, to become more rich, powerful, and formidable than it ever was before. And, further, to shew in what a monstrous degree we were at that time bewitched, it is evident that a design was laid, and very near being executed, of making a poor despicable *Popish* bigot our king, who would undoubtedly have soon brought this nation to the lowest degree of contempt and misery.

DURING the next reign a remarkable piece of witchcraft was performed in the memorable year 1720. The people were made to believe that certain wizards had a knack, only by speaking a few words, or writing a few lines, of increasing, in an instant, great part of the riches in the nation, a thousand or twelve hundred fold; of turning the most vile and common things into gold; nay, of creating gold out of nothing: even the wisest and most knowing in the nation, as well as the most ignorant and simple, were so bewitched, as to believe these monstrous chimeras. Accordingly little was seen or regarded for a considerable time, but some buying estates, or contracting for them, at immense prices; others preparing repositories of a most enormous size, in which to lay up their vast heaps of money, and great numbers were actually spending their supposed shares of this imaginary wealth, in all manner of riot, luxury, and extravagance.

THIS piece of witchcraft ended in some of the wizards gaining monstrous estates, and in the impoverishing and ruining multitudes of families.

SINCE those times, besides the bewitched excise-scheme, we have seen many proofs of witchcraft.

FOR

FOR are not any people bewitched to fall out with their natural, best allies, and court their ancient and worst enemies ; to negotiate themselves out of all reputation, credit, and alliances ? And, being immensely in debt, to hire foreign troops, at a vast expence, to protect places which appertain to other dominions, and are of no use to those at whose charge they are preserved ? To send out squadrons to combat only with unhealthy climates, and pestilential distempers : set forth mighty fleets, at a prodigious charge, to stay at home ; and, at the same time, tamely suffer the insults, injuries, depredations, and most contemptuous and cruel treatment of a nation over whom they have a manifest superiority ?

AND are not we in the highest degree bewitched, to expose ourselves not only to continual alarms, and the fear of invasions, from a powerful neighbour, but to the utmost danger of being actually conquered and becoming slaves ? and all this for want of a numerous and useful militia, by whom we might be effectually secured from this danger, and even from all apprehensions of it.

THOUGH multitudes of other instances might be given, both from history and experience, of many people and nations having

been, and being now, bewitched in the management of civil affairs, yet these few may suffice; and we shall proceed to demonstrate, that the same has happened in ecclesiastical.

WAS not this nation bewitched to remain so many ages in the *Popish* religion? and to suffer *Rome* to exact and draw from us vast quantities of wealth and treasure, for such worthless baubles as indulgences, absolutions, pardons, relicks, &c. And after this country had, by a lucky accident, been in a good degree purged from this pernicious and slavish religion; were not the people bewitched to return to it *like a dog to his vomit, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire?*

WERE not many people, in and about the reign of *Charles* the 1st, and the times immediately following, in a remarkable manner, and to a high degree, bewitched with strange enthusiastick notions, and wild vagaries of religion? The hypocritical and forbidding appearance of which, certainly occasioned a deluge of licentiousness and impiety to break in upon us, and also in a great measure prevented a happy settlement of our civil affairs in this kingdom.

THE endless disputes in the world concerning grace, election and reprobation, priests vestments,

vestments, what postures of worshipping were most acceptable to the Deity; the right time of keeping *Easter* and other holidays; whether the virgin *Mary* was conceived in original sin; how long our Saviour continued in hell, or if he went there at all; if the light that shone about Jesus on *Mount Tabor* was created or not. The endless and wise disputes on these, and a multitude of other subjects, equally material, and as difficult to be certainly known, as whether the controverters of them were most knaves or fools; and the cruel wars occasioned by some of them, are manifest proofs what numbers of men have been bewitched.

WERE not crusadoes for the recovery of the holy land, in which formerly so much treasure was expended, and such multitudes of men perished; all religious wars, inquisitions, and all persecutions on account of religion, so many instances of the like?

WOULD men have wrote so many books, and have preached such numbers of sermons, to libel the Deity, by ascribing to him the worst passions and qualities of the worst of men? Would any ever have asserted that existence even in everlasting torments is preferable to non-existence? That the sacraments, though essentially necessary to salva-

tion, are invalid, unless administered by those who are episcopally commissioned? That the souls of men are naturally mortal, but that the immortalizing virtue is conveyed into them by baptism, given only by persons episcopally ordained^k? In a word, would some men have spent their time in contriving such silly and incredible tales, such abominable and wicked doctrines, and have obtruded them upon the world as necessary parts of religion; and would others have believed, and earnestly contended for these gross absurdities, if they had not been bewitched?

THE premises being considered, it is humbly hoped that this bill will not pass into a law.

^k *Vide*, "An epistolary discourse, proving that the soul
" is a principle naturally mortal; but immortalized actually
" by the pleasure of God, to punishment, or to reward, by
" its union with the divine baptismal Spirit." Wherein is
proved, that none have the power of giving this divine
immortalizing Spirit, since the apostles, but only the
BISHOPS. By *Henry Dodwell*, A. M.

O F

A R B I T R A R Y

G O V E R N M E N T

By a Single P E R S O N.

Salus populi suprema lex esto.

A R B I T R A R Y power in a single person to govern a nation, is certainly one of the greatest absurdities, both in politics and good sense, that ever was invented; nevertheless, we have seen many volumes wrote, particularly by pious and learned divines, not only to prove it reasonable, but also to inforce submission to such a form of government, as being instituted and commanded by God.

ONE argument made use of to prove the reasonableness and expediency of a single person's

son's being invested with absolute power, is, that God who is One, governs the universe: thus, because one Almighty, Wise, Good Being, who made the world, governs it by the laws of nature and reason, therefore a weak, and perhaps foolish, wicked, and cruel man, must rule over a nation with unlimited power, and by no laws but those of his own will and fancy.

THE duty and necessity of submitting, even to the most arbitrary and tyrannical governments on pain of eternal damnation, have been endeavoured to be proved by certain texts of scripture, and, among many others, by this, *There is no power but of God*. But this passage might as well be made use of to prove that lions or tygers ought not to be resisted or destroyed, nor means used to stop plagues in their course: for these also are of God.

So far has the opinion of passive obedience and non-resistance to princes been carried, that a right reverend prelate of our nation has asserted¹, That arms, offensive or defensive, may not be taken up against a lawful sovereign by any man, at any time, in any case whatsoever; the express command of God himself only excepted. Not for the maintenance

¹ Bishop Sanderfon's Works, fol. 522.

nance of the lives or liberties either of ourselves or others; nor for the defence of religion; nor for the preservation of a church or state; no, nor yet, if that could be imagined possible, for the salvation of a soul; no, not for the redemption of the whole world.

THE divine rays that are pretended to shine about the heads of bad princes, are only formed by the mists cast before the eyes of their subjects. There can no other good reason be given for the sacredness of a prince's person, beyond that of another man's, but the benefit or safety of the state being dependent on his preservation, or connected therewith: but, when a prince becomes a tyrant, and the enjoyment of liberty, property, and all that is valuable to the publick, can only be obtained or secured by his removal, every independent, unbiaſſed, sensible man, will soon form a judgment what ought to be done.

A STATE may be flourishing, powerful, and happy without a king, and be far from standing in need of one; but what a figure will a king make without a people? Witness his late sacred royal majesty king *James* the II^d, when driven from this kingdom for male-administration.

IF it is better in some countries, or in certain conjunctures, to suffer a wicked, arbitrary prince to govern, than attempt to remove him; as where the majority of a nation are so stupid, that they are tenacious of slavery; or such a king is so strengthened, or surrounded by an army of mercenaries, that he is too potent for the people to contend with; this is only owing to the danger, or perhaps the impossibility of overcoming him without destruction to the publick: so when a natural body is throughout infected with bad humours, it avails little to cut off one diseased member; or in a sounder body, if a cancerous, or other grievous part cannot be taken off without manifest danger to the patient's life, there may be a necessity to let it remain.

THE principal advocates for absolute monarchy, and the divine right of kings to tyrannize over their subjects, are generally dependent courtiers, and worldly-minded priests: these, and arbitrary princes, like sharpers, play into one another's hands; and as the latter oftentimes confederate to cheat and ruin private and single persons, so the former combine to pillage, impoverish and destroy states and kingdoms.

NOTWITHSTANDING such numbers of
sermons

sermons have been preached, and heaps of volumes wrote on this subject of government, yet it is evident, that many preachers and writers have only darkned counsel by words without knowledge: for the question concerning different forms of government lies in a very narrow compass, and is only this; which may be most for the good of the community? To suppose that arbitrary power in a single person is preferable to limited power, or to that which is diffused through several branches of the commonwealth, is to suppose tyranny better than just government, and slavery more eligible than liberty.

WERE there any possibility for a reasonable man to doubt whether absolute power in a single person, or that which is limited and divided, is most advantageous to the publick; let such a one but take a view of the conduct of absolute princes, and the different conditions of countries where such bear rule, and where the people are under a free government, and this doubt must soon be removed.

HISTORY and books of travels abound with accounts of the mad and tyrannical behaviour of despotick governors, and the grievous oppressions and cruelties exercised by them on their subjects: these are so well known

known to all persons of reading, and would swell to such a bulk if particularly insisted on, that I shall mention only a very few instances : indeed what are the greatest part of histories of most arbitrary princes lives, but one continued scene of tyranny and oppression ?

THE emperor *Nero*, among a multitude of other wicked, infamous, and destructive actions, set the city of *Rome* on fire, and to escape the odium of so detestable a crime, he charged it upon the *Christians*, and assigned that as a cause for beginning the first persecution against them. *Caligula*, like many other weak and inconsiderate princes, utterly despised the love of his people : *Oderint, dum metuant* ; let them hate so they fear, was a common saying with him. When this compassionate man commanded any one to be put to death, his usual order was ; *Ita feri, ut se mori sentiat* ; strike so, as he may feel himself die. This *Pater Patriæ*, this father of his country, wished that the *Roman* people had but one neck, that he might dispatch them all at a blow.

MULY ISHMAEL, late emperor of *Morocco*, is reported to have murdered, with his own sacred royal hands, twenty-thousand of his subjects in the first twenty years of his reign,

reign, and before his death, it is said, that he made up that number forty thousand. Monsieur *St. Olon*, ambassador of *France*, from whom I take the former part of this account, adds these words, *Ce que je pourrois d'autant mieux presumer ou confirmer, &c.* This I may be the better able to warrant or affirm, having reckoned forty-seven which he killed during twenty-one days that I remained at his court.

THE emperor of *Arracan*, who was, it seems, a very devout man; for he frequently visited the pagod of his supreme deity, and daily sent a sumptuous dinner to him; being told by one of his prophets, that he could not long survive his coronation, consulted a certain person which way to avert the danger, who advised him to sacrifice six thousand hearts of his subjects, with great numbers of those of other creatures. He did so; and the more effectually to gain the favour of his gods, and preserve his own precious life, this humane, pious prince, built a house, and laid the foundation upon women with child, by which he destroyed eighteen thousand persons.

IF we take a view of the countries under arbitrary government, what a scene of oppression, desolation, poverty, and depopulation presents

presents itself? Where are now the *Grecian* states, which, whilst they preserved their liberties, were the great nurseries of arts and sciences, and produced so many heroick examples of integrity, fortitude, valour, and every other virtue? These states were, mostly, destroyed by arbitrary power, and there now remain only the names of many of them, and some noble ruins to shew their former grandeur. In like manner, ancient *Rome*, whilst possessed of liberty, subdued great part of the world, but meanly submitting to slavery, was by that means undone.

THE different effects of liberty and slavery in *Denmark*, are so apparent and recent, that we will take a short view of the freedom formerly enjoyed by the inhabitants of that country; the condition they were then in, and the consequences that attended the loss of their liberty.

DENMARK, says a noble author, in his account of that kingdom, as it was in the year 1692, was till within these two and thirty years governed by a king chosen by the people of all sorts: the estates of the realm being convened to that intent, were to elect for their prince, such a person as to them appeared valiant, just, merciful, affable, a main-
tainer

tainer of the laws, a lover of the people, prudent, and adorned with all other virtues fit for government. But if after such a choice, they found themselves mistaken, and that they had advanced a cruel, vitious, tyrannical person, they frequently deposed him, oftentimes banished, sometimes destroyed him; and this either formally, by making him answer before the representative body of the people; or if by ill practices he was grown too powerful to be legally contended with, they dispatched him without any ceremony the best way they could.

FREQUENT meetings of the estates, was a part of the very fundamental constitution: in those meetings, all matters relating to good government were transacted; good laws were enacted, all affairs belonging to peace or war, alliances, disposal of great offices, &c. were debated and settled.

WHILST this state of liberty remained, the country was full of inhabitants, and abounded with trade; the nobility or gentry lived in great affluence, and the peasants enjoyed the necessaries of life in abundance: the people, whilst free, were brave and happy; but immediately on their submitting to slavery, they became poor, and miserable, lost their for-

mer courage, and even their natural tendency to be so populous.

SINCE the introducing of arbitrary power into this kingdom, trade has so left it, that those towns which formerly exported ten or twelve large ships lading of corn yearly, and could, on an emergency, furnish 200,000 rix-dollars for the publick service, cannot now load one small vessel of rye, or raise 100 rix-dollars; on the contrary, the collectors of the taxes are forced, in lieu of money, to take the people's household goods, whereby the poor creatures are left destitute of all manner of necessaries.

IN *Zealand*, the peasants or boors are as absolute slaves as the negroes in *Barbadoes*, but with this difference, that their fare is not so good. Neither they, nor their posterity, to all generations, can leave the land to which they belong; the gentlemen counting their riches by their stocks of boors, as here with us by our stocks of cattle. In case of purchase, they are sold, as belonging to the freehold, just as timber-trees are with us.

MANY of the antient families are so fallen to decay, that unless it be their good fortune to procure an employment, civil or military,
at

at court, they are forced to live meanly and obscurely in some corner of their ruinous houses, which were formerly like palaces. But most of the nobility patiently endure their poverty at home, where their spirits, as well as their estates, grow so mean, that they are scarcely known to be gentlemen, either by discourse or garb.

So exorbitantly are the lands of the gentry taxed in this country, that some gentlemen of great estates have offered to make an absolute surrender to the king, of large possessions in the island of *Zealand*, in which the capital of the kingdom is situated, rather than pay the taxes; which offer, though pressed with earnestness, would by no means be accepted. But when the like tender has been accepted from others, they have been seen with a great deal of joy, declaring that the king had been so gracious as to take their estates from them.

THESE are some of the blessed effects which have attended this nation's giving up its liberties, and submitting to arbitrary power: or as *Frederick* the III^d, king of *Denmark*, in his *Lex Regia*, or *The Royal Law of Denmark*, very devoutly expresses it; of God's having graciously inclined the hearts of the people to part with all their own rights and

A a 2

privileges,

privileges, to discharge the king from his coronation-oath ; making all bonds and deeds signed by him for preserving the liberties of the people to be null, void, and of none effect ; and declaring him and his heirs to have an absolute despotical right to the kingdoms of *Denmark* and *Norway* ^m.

WE will now see how happily the people live in one of the best countries in the world, and particularly under the dominion of Christ's pretended

^m The reader who has not seen the *Danish* laws of king *Christian* the fifth, printed at *Copenhagen* in the year 1710, will perhaps not be displeased to find here the following curious passage, translated, and extracted from them, setting forth the absolute power of the prince.

“ By virtue of the royal law, on which the true foundation of the royal power stands, the king is absolute and hereditary monarch, and lord of his kingdoms of *Denmark* and *Norway*. He may, according to his pleasure, through the supreme power and authority peculiar to him, make laws, explain and suppress them, and dispense with them, and those of his ancestors, as he thinks fit. — The king has also a supreme power over all the clergy ; and none but he can make any constitutions about religion, establish ecclesiastical ceremonies, and assemble synods and councils about religious matters, according to the word of God, and the confession of *Augsburg*. — He may, when he pleases, declare war, make alliances, and lay taxes and tributes upon his subjects. — And therefore all his subjects, whatever rank or condition they be of, ought to acknowledge and reverence him as the supreme head, as being above all human laws, and having no other superior or judge in things ecclesiastical and political, but God alone, &c. p. 548.

pretended vicar upon earth. Doctor *Burnet* gives this account of the part of *Italy* he passed through.

ALL the country from *Florence*, through the great duke's dominions, was so miserable, that the doctor concluded it must be the most dispeopled of all *Italy*; but the pope's territories were still in a much worse condition, for a vast champain country between *M. Fiascone* and *Viterbo* lay almost quite deserted. And that great town had so few inhabitants, and those so poor and miserable, that the people in the worst places in *Scotland* make a better appearance. Even in the neighbourhood of *Rome*, where the soil was extremely rich, the land had neither inhabitants nor cattle upon it, to the tenth part of what it could bear. The country, on the way from *Rome* to *Naples*, and *Civita Vecchia*; particularly that vast rich champain country which runs all along to *Terracina*, for a hundred miles in length, and in many places twelve or twenty miles in breadth, is abandoned to such a degree, that as far as one's eye can reach, there is often not so much as a house to be seen, but on the hills that are on the north side of the valley.

It is, says our author, the rigor of the government that hath driven away the inhabi-

the most abject state of slavery and misery, were formerly as free and happy as *England* or *Holland* are at present. The kingdom of *Arragon*, which is now become a province of *Spain*, and under the same tyrannical government both civil and ecclesiastical, was heretofore remarkable for its liberty, as will appear by the following account.

WHEN the people of this country shook off the *Moorish* yoke, they chose *Garcias Xermenes*, to be their sovereign, on condition that if he, or any of his successors, broke in upon their laws, they should forfeit their title, and leave the people at liberty to chuse another. To keep the king to this agreement, they appointed a magistrate, entitled *Justitia*, to observe the actions of the king and his officers; and this magistrate was answerable to none for his administration, but the general meeting of the states. They likewise enacted, That if the king oppressed any of the subjects, the great men might assemble and seize upon his revenues, till he did justice to the party offended; and when they enthroned the king, he was to kneel down before this magistrate, and to swear, That he would inviolably preserve their laws and privileges: after which, they proclaimed the king in the following words:

“ WE,

“ WE, who are as good men as yourself,
 “ constitute you our king and governor, on
 “ condition that you maintain us in our rights
 “ and properties, otherwise we disown you.”

IT may probably be urged, that though princes, with absolute power, were formerly very cruel, and in distant parts of the world, as in *Asia* or *Africa*, they may be so at present, yet in *Europe* we have had, in late ages, or have at present, very few instances of the like. And that particularly the *French*, though under an arbitrary prince, are now a great and thriving people, and do not feel many of the evils commonly attending absolute power. It is true, that personal cruelties, such as are practised by *Asian* and *African* monarchs, are not at present fashionable in *Europe*: but what difference is it to any people, whether they are destroyed immediately by the sacred hands of the Lord's anointed to gratify his cruelty, or in unnecessary wars to gratify his ambition? Or what mighty consolation is it to them that the prince is not naturally a cruel man, when they are murdered by his dragoons, or tortured to death by the most inhuman barbarities of an inquisition? Or supposing they are not murdered by the one or the other; yet, if they are deprived of liberty, and, by exorbitant taxes, and other arbitrary

rary oppressions, reduced to starve, they are much beholden to their prince's clemency to suffer them to live in such a slavish, beggarly, miserable condition.

THE *French* are indeed, at present, a great and thriving people, but how long have they been so? Or what assurance have they of continuing in those circumstances? Their prosperous and happy condition does not arise from the form or constitution of their government, but merely from the administration of it: when that falls into other hands, as very speedily it must, there is great probability *France* will again feel the terrible effects of arbitrary power. It is well known, that, a little more than twenty years since, this kingdom, which is by nature one of the finest and most plentiful in *Europe*, and undoubtedly the most formidable, was reduced to extreme poverty and misery; indeed, to the very brink of destruction. These calamities proceeded entirely from the ambition of an absolute monarch, who expended such vast treasures, impoverished so rich a country, and destroyed such numbers of people, to punish those who had not offended him, and to conquer nations over whom he had no manner of right to govern.

IF

IF there are some few instances in history of arbitrary princes who have governed with lenity and moderation, this is no good reason for trusting them with power to ruin their countries. If now and then a lion should be found so tame and gentle as to do no mischief, I suppose this would be no inducement to any people in their senses, to suffer lions in their towns or cities unsecured or unrestrained.

ABSOLUTE dominion intoxicates men^o: when they are complimented with such a power, as properly belongs only to the Deity, the poor creatures are apt to fancy themselves gods indeed, and accordingly treat their subjects as an inferior species. If princes are just and humane, the best means to keep them so, is to limit their power, in such a manner, that it may truly be said, they can do no wrong.

PERHAPS it may be urged, that though princes are ever so arbitrary, yet they seldom rule without a council, who probably advise them

• *Sapor* the II^d, king of *Persia*, was superstitious, and impious to such a degree, as to shoot an arrow against heaven; a most violent persecutor of the *Christians*, of whom it is reported that he put to death two hundred and ninety thousand. He stiled himself, *Rex regum, particeps siderum, frater solis & lunæ*, i. e. King of kings, whose place is among the stars, brother to the sun and moon. Vide, *The Life of the Emperor Julian*, p. 260. from *Ammianus Marcellinus*.

them to act for the good of the whole. If that should happen sometimes to be the case, an absolute prince may refuse to follow such advice : besides, has he not the choice of his own counsellors ? Suppose he is a weak man, is he likely to chuse wise counsellors ? Suppose he is wicked, is it probable he will chuse honest, good men for his advisers ? What are generally the principal recommendations to most princes favour, and the surest steps to preferment and trust with them ? Are virtue, and ability ? Or a conformity to their humours ; serving them in their pleasures, or vices ; or an attachment to their particular interests, which are very often directly opposite to the interests of the people ? In our country, in former days, the wisest king of his time, if his own word might be taken ; and ^p inspired by the Holy Ghost, if a bishop's opinion may be depended on, chose his favourites, and first ministers, not for their abilities, or because they were fit for their stations, but by mere caprice, or for the beauty of their persons.

CER-

^p In a dispute between the *Episcopalians* and *Puritans*, at *Hampton-Court*, king *James* the 1st always replying, one while with reasons, another while (more like a king) with authority and threats, *Whitgift*, archbishop of *Canterbury*, said, he verily believed the king spoke by the Spirit of God. *Rapin's History of England*, vol. II. p. 162.

CERTAINLY nothing can be plainer, both from reason and experience, than that arbitrary power, in a single person, is a most pernicious and destructive method of governing. But it must be confessed, that all people are not capable of liberty, or the best forms of government.

IF a nation has so long bowed its neck under the yoke of slavery, as not only to have lost all sense of the value of liberty, but even to glory in their monarch's being absolute; and to erect statues, and invent the most ^a flattering and impious inscriptions and pænegyrics to honour the man who tyrannized over, and almost ruined them; it is certain such a people are as unfit for freedom, as they are unlikely to recover it.

AGAIN, if the nobility and gentry, in any country, grow so luxurious and extravagant, that a considerable part of them become necessitous, and dependent on a court, and receive salaries or pensions from it; if most of
the

^a A L'Auguste majesté du *Louis* le grand, l'invincible, l'heureux, le sage, le conquérant. * * Le plus grand présent que le ciel ait jamais fait à la terre. * * *Divo Ludovico.* * * *Viro immortalis*, &c. that is, *To the august majesty of Lewis the great, the invincible, the happy, the wise, the conqueror.*—*The greatest present that heaven ever made to the earth—To the divine Lewis.—To the immortal man.* The former of these is at *Versailles*, and the two latter are at *Paris*.

the clergy are so intent on preferments, translations, &c. as to worship the fountain from whence they spring; esteem the prince the giver of every good and perfect gift, and sacrifice all other considerations to that of accumulating wealth and power: if this should be the case of any people, who are at present in possession of liberty, or some share of it, they are certainly in the utmost danger of losing that inestimable benefit, whenever a prince of more ambition, resolution, and cunning, than honesty, goodness, and true wisdom, shall endeavour to deprive them of it: and, if this is the case of those who are already slaves, they seem condemned to drudge on in that miserable condition, without hopes of redemption.



OF THE
 PRIDE *of* MEN
 AS A
 SPECIES.

*And God said, let us make man in our image,
 after our likeness.-----
 So God created man in his own image, in the
 image of God created he him.*

GENESIS, chap. i. v. 26, 27.

THAT pride which is so commonly observed in men as individuals, has frequently been treated by moralists, satirists, and other writers, as it deserves. The folly of one man's overvaluing himself upon his person, another upon his dress; one upon his estate, another upon his pedigree; one upon his titles, another upon his horses and equipage; one upon his politeness, another upon his clownishness; one upon his wit or knowledge,

ledge, another upon his folly or ignorance; one upon his own actions, another upon those of his ancestors: this kind of pride hath been often rallied with much spirit, and not altogether without success; but the high conceit which men form of themselves as a species, has met with much more indulgence, and perhaps principally for this reason: whatever fine things are attributed to men in the gross, every man fancies do honour to himself, and therefore few are alarmed by them; every person taking such a share of these encomiums as he pleases, or as he thinks he is entitled to.

IF the high opinion we are so apt to entertain of our species, caused us to act with compassion to inferior creatures, and to behave with decency, respect, and humanity to one another; these good effects would, in some measure, at least, excuse the cause of them: but when it is evident that this vain-glory puffs us up with extravagant and ridiculous conceits of ourselves; puts us upon using subordinate creatures with cruelty; and by no means with-holds us from oppressing and tyrannizing over our PEERS, our FELLOW-LORDS of the world, it then plainly appears to be not only useless, but as mischievous as it is senseless.

NOT-

NOTWITHSTANDING we may flatter ourselves with a belief, that the exalted notions we entertain of mankind are compliments paid to them in general, and not to ourselves in particular, yet if we examine our own hearts thoroughly and impartially, we shall perhaps find more of egotism in these compliments than some are aware of. It is probable that those who think most magnificently of human nature, have been first induced thereto, by forming too great an opinion of themselves. And it is more than probable, that those who entertain the highest ideas of their own excellencies, and those of mankind, are least acquainted both with human nature and themselves.

BUT whatever cause or motive may be assigned for this pride of our species, we see it frequently breaks out in flagrant instances. Not contented with thinking this globe we inhabit, with the productions, and all other creatures in it were created only for our use, many of us are likewise so vain as to imagine the same of the sun, moon, and stars, and indeed of all the visible creation.

IT is notorious, that many learned and knowing men, as well as the ignorant vulgar, have fancied, not only that monsters were
B b produced,

produced, the earth convulsed, and the dead raised to life, to foretel the death of some eminent man, perhaps a cruel tyrant; but that the heavenly bodies were employed on the same errand. We are told particularly, that the sun lost considerably of its lustre, and went into mourning a whole year, for the death of a great ^r usurper.

IN former times, when a battle had been fought, a town besieged, or a country laid waste; how many strange stories were told, that these had been prognosticated by showers of blood; armies fighting in the air, and other miraculous fights? Nay, it was well if nature herself, on such occasions, was not almost unhinged. Whereas, in truth, if the poor reptiles destroyed one another, or the potsheards of the earth dashed one another to pieces, nature took no more notice of it, than of the slaughtering so many animals every day for our food or diversion, or of the death of so many worms or flies.

THE antients not only described many heroes and their actions, as vastly surpassing the race of men, or what they are capable of performing; and of these made their *Semi-dei*, or half-gods; but their supreme deities, such
as

^r *Julius Cæsar.*

as *Saturn*, *Jupiter*, &c. were as mere men as any of their foolish and impious worshippers.

WHEN the devil, who was, it seems, perfectly well acquainted with the pride of human-nature, and of the female-sex in particular, attempted to seduce our general mother *Eve*, he tells her, *Ye shall be as gods*. But the devil was a liar from the beginning. He well knew, that instead of being like gods, multitudes of us should become like himself. Did not the first-born of our god-like parents (*Adam* and *Eve*) murder his brother on account of a difference in religion? And how many myriads have their god-like race destroyed for the same cause?

AMONG the heathens, their gods were believed so to interest themselves in mens affairs, as to be personally present in their battles; to engage on different sides, nay, occasionally to change sides, and fight with as much animosity as any human combatants. This indeed, considering what sort of gods they were, what stuff they had been made of, and that some of them were of one country, some of another, was not very disagreeable to their characters. In this point heathens are clearly outdone by many christians, who pretend to worship only ONE God the creator

of the universe, the common father of all men ; and yet imagine this Being entering into their senseless disputes and quarrels, assisting them to enslave and destroy one another, and to bring devastation, ruin, and destruction upon their cities and countries.

IN these absurd opinions there is, no doubt, a great mixture of superstition ; but surely men could not think themselves so considerable, such favourites of heaven ; and that God and nature must be thus concerned in their affairs, and so solicitous about them, if it was not for that pride so incident to many of our species.

To try how well this pride becomes mankind in their present fallen state, (for, according to the motto at the head of this essay, we were originally created god-like creatures indeed) let us take a view of one of these lords of the earth, for whom, according to his vain imagination, all things were made : see him shook by an ague, or infected with loathsome distempers : or, if you think a different situation more to his advantage, see him in dalliance with his *Corinna*, and observe what an abject slave he is : for her sake he betrays his friend, and at her nod fires a city, or sacrifices his country. Is this a creature for whom
pride

pride was made? or for heaven and earth to be so anxious about? Oh, but some of these infirmities are what man's nature has subjected him to: are they so? but methinks pride very ill becomes one whom nature has made liable to such weaknesses. However we will take a view of him in different circumstances, to which, it may be presumed, that mere nature has not subjected him. See this exalted being, cheating, defrauding, robbing, and murdering his fellow creatures. It will perhaps be said, that such who thus behave are only the off-scouring, the refuse of mankind: but they are very numerous; and many of them by their births, educations and stations in the world seem to be raised much above the refuse of the people. How many priests, inquisitors, governors, and ministers of state may justly be accounted cheats, robbers and murderers?

BUT that we may do mankind the utmost justice, let us take a view of some of those who are placed at, and regarded as the very head of the species: behold a mighty monarch appointed (if some men are to be believed) by God himself to rule over a great and potent people, who bestow upon him immense treasures, and almost divine honours, that he may cherish, defend, and protect them: behold

this man rioting in, and spending great part of a nation's wealth on himself and his minions ; and, perhaps, suffering and encouraging hungry ravenous priests to glean up and devour what his luxury and profusion had spared : or, if he happens to be one of those commonly called heroes, see him use all manner of arts, force, and cruelties, to make his subjects slaves ; and then lavish away their treasure and their blood to conquer his neighbours, that he may reduce them also into the same miserable condition. And, to compleat this advantageous view of mankind, behold multitudes of miserable, cowardly, grovelling wretches, not only tamely submitting to slavery, both civil and ecclesiastical, but hugging their chains, and worshipping their tyrants.

THIS is indeed a bad prospect of mankind : but surely there are honest, just, merciful, humane men, and lovers and defenders of liberty. There are so. But, if these were at all inclined to pride themselves in being men, they would meet such mortifications from the stupidity, folly, superstition, bigotry, wickedness, and cruelty they daily see in their own species, as would effectually subdue every vanity of that kind.

WHEN we extol a man for acting honestly, bravely, or in any other respect virtuously ;
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methinks we make but a poor compliment to men in general : for as the principal reason why comeliness and beauty are so much admired, is because they are very rare ; so the uncommonness of virtue, among mankind, causes it to be so highly celebrated when we meet with it.

MEN, considered in their single capacity, are some of the most helpless creatures in the world ; but, by mutual assistance, we see they may live comfortably, and, when they are formed into well-regulated societies, they frequently perform wonders : this cannot justly administer any thing to our pride, but should teach us, that since we stand so much in want of assistance from others, and continually receive such helps and advantages from them and society, that we, on our parts, should assist our fellow-creatures, do them what good we can, and contribute all in our power to the benefit of mankind. This is morality ; and surely nothing can be more reasonable, or capable of a clearer or fuller demonstration, than that such a conduct is both the duty and true interest of every man.

IF we take a view of those parts of the universe which are within our ken, and consider that probably all the planets in our system
are

are inhabited by intelligent beings, which, though they must, by the different temperature of their habitations from ours, and from one anothers, be of very different natures, yet some, or all of these beings, may greatly excel us : if we still raise our contemplations to what is no improbable conjecture, *viz.* That all the fixed stars being suns, each of them hath a system of planets belonging to it ; that there may also in the universe be prodigious numbers of other suns and planets, or habitable worlds, beyond the reach of our glasses, and that these may be peopled with intelligent beings of different natures, rising perhaps gradually, in their several kinds, and still approaching, towards perfection : this speculation tends to excite in us noble ideas both of the Creator and his works ; and may also serve effectually to mortify the pride of man, and shew him how vain, arrogant, and worse than childish it is for so poor a creature, the inhabitant of a globe which is only as a small spot in the universe, to imagine himself the chief of the creation, or suppose that nature should be subservient to him, and Providence so much concerned about his affairs.

No doubt but that Being, who made the worlds, may extend his care to all parts of them, and we have good reason to think he
hath

hath so done: but this doth not appear, as many men have imagined, by God's making their enemies his enemies, and accordingly pouring down his judgments upon them; in altering or reversing the course of nature for the benefit of some, greatly, perhaps, to the prejudice of others; or in miraculous signs and wonders. The Providence of God, over his works, doth not appear by these things; but is conspicuous in those established laws of nature, which preserve that beautiful order and harmony so visible in the creation.



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(*N.* signifies Note.)

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